



Security Council

Distr.: General
20 November 2017

Original: English

**Letter dated 20 November 2017 from the Panel of Experts on
South Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council**

The members of the Panel of Experts on South Sudan, whose mandate was extended pursuant to Security Council resolution 2353 (2017), have the honour to transmit herewith the Panel's interim report, which was submitted in accordance with paragraph 2 of resolution 2353 (2017), by which the provisions of paragraph 12 (c) of resolution 2290 (2016) were renewed.

The report was provided to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015) on 27 October 2017.

The Panel would appreciate if the present letter and the report were brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(Signed) Klem **Ryan**
Coordinator

Panel of Experts on South Sudan

(Signed) Andrews **Atta-Asamoah**
Expert

(Signed) Andrei **Kolmakov**
Expert

(Signed) Anna **Oosterlinck**
Expert

(Signed) Colin **Thomas-Jensen**
Expert

* Reissued for technical reasons on 27 November 2017.

17-19096* (E) 271117



Please recycle



Interim report of the Panel of Experts on South Sudan

Summary

Since the mandate of the Panel Experts on South Sudan was renewed in May 2017, fighting has continued in diverse locations around the country, with the consequences of the violence endured largely by civilians. Meanwhile, the economic situation continues to worsen, as various conflict actors move deeper into a "war economy", wherein the extraction of resources (oil, gold and teak, inter alia) is carried out in the furtherance of, and in parallel to, military operations and the enrichment of elites. Those who can flee the violence continue to do so, leading to large flows of internally displaced persons and refugees, many of whom face extreme food insecurity, disease, family and community dissolution and disrupted education.

Despite the catastrophic conditions in South Sudan, armed forces, armed groups and militias, particularly those affiliated with the President, Salva Kiir, and the First Vice-President, Taban Deng Gai, continue to actively impede both humanitarian and peacekeeping operations. The foreseeable and, in the Panel's assessment, intended consequence of those impediments is unequivocally clear: humanitarian aid and operations to protect civilians from violence are often unable to achieve their aims, resulting in a worsening humanitarian crisis in many areas. Specifically, the Panel finds that government forces have employed tactics to intentionally depopulate parts of Upper Nile and deliberately increase food insecurity in Bagari, near Wau.

Opposition to the Government has become increasingly diverse and widespread as the conflict has expanded to different parts of the country. Opposition groups lack access to significant military materiel, a factor that has been exploited by the Government during its military offensives in Jonglei and Upper Nile in 2017.

Diplomatic efforts by some regional States have intensified in recent months, in an attempt to advance the establishment of the high-level revitalization forum of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). The aim of the forum is to resuscitate the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan of August 2015, following the collapse of the transitional government in July 2016. While IGAD has embarked on wide-ranging consultations with numerous stakeholders in South Sudan, the lack of political will on the part of the Government and some opposition groups is a significant obstacle to peace, especially when combined with underlying rivalries, competing interests and divergent preferences among regional States over how to resolve the conflict and deal with spoilers.

Absent a change in the current conflict dynamics, the coming dry season will see further fighting and civilian suffering, as the Government continues to pursue military victory over political compromise.

Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Background	4
A. Mandate and appointment	4
B. Methodology	4
C. Cooperation with international organizations and other stakeholders	5
II. Conflict summary	5
III. Regional developments	7
A. Peace initiatives	7
B. Differing regional interests	9
C. Obstruction of peace efforts	10
IV. Ethnic violence and the humanitarian crisis	13
A. Denial of food assistance in Wau as a weapon of war	13
B. Ethnically targeted depopulation in Upper Nile and the threat of forced relocation	17
C. Land grabbing and natural resource exploitation in the Equatorias	18
V. Elections and the crisis of government legitimacy	20
VI. Arms	20
VII. Conclusion	21
VIII. Recommendations	22
Annexes*	
I. Examination of weapons	23
II. Weapons transport document	31
III. Implementation of the asset freeze and travel ban	33
IV. Macroeconomic conditions	35

* The annexes are being circulated in the language of submission only and without formal editing.

I. Background

A. Mandate and appointment

1. By its resolution 2206 (2015), the Security Council imposed a sanctions regime targeting individuals and entities contributing to the conflict in South Sudan and established a sanctions committee (Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015) concerning South Sudan). The Committee designated six individuals for targeted sanctions on 1 July 2015. With the adoption by the Council of resolution 2353 (2017) on 24 May 2017, the sanctions regime was renewed until 31 May 2018.

2. In establishing the sanctions regime, the Security Council decided that the sanctions measures, consisting of a travel ban and an asset freeze, would apply to individuals and/or entities designated by the Committee as responsible for, complicit in or having engaged in, directly or indirectly, actions or policies threatening the peace, security or stability of South Sudan.

3. The Security Council also established a panel of experts (Panel of Experts on South Sudan) to provide information and analysis regarding the implementation of the resolution. This includes information relevant to potential designations and information regarding the supply, sale or transfer of arms and related materiel and related military or other assistance, including through illicit trafficking networks, to individuals and entities undermining political processes or violating international human rights law or international humanitarian law. By Council resolution 2353 (2017), the Panel's mandate was extended until 30 June 2018.

4. On 11 July 2017, the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Committee, appointed the five members of the Panel (see S/2017/594): a regional issues expert (Andrews Atta-Asamoah), a natural resources and finance expert (Andrei Kolmakov), a humanitarian affairs expert (Anna Oosterlinck), a coordinator and arms expert (Klem Ryan) and an armed groups expert (Colin Thomas-Jensen).

5. To date during the current mandate, members of the Panel have travelled to Ethiopia, Italy, Kenya, South Sudan, Switzerland, Uganda, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

B. Methodology

6. The present report was prepared on the basis of research and interviews conducted by the Panel between July and October 2017, as well as a review of available documents from the Government of South Sudan, regional entities, including the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the African Union, and international organizations working on issues pertaining to South Sudan. The report also draws on earlier work by the Panel, including previous reports to the Security Council, both public and confidential, hundreds of interviews and a large body of information and evidence provided by a wide range of sources.

7. The Panel follows the standards recommended by the Informal Working Group of the Security Council on General Issues of Sanctions in its report of December 2006 (S/2006/997, annex). Those standards call for reliance on verified, genuine documents, concrete evidence and on-site observations by experts, including photographs wherever possible. The Panel has corroborated all information contained in the present report using multiple, independent sources to meet the appropriate evidentiary standard.

8. The Panel has conducted its work with the greatest transparency possible, while being cognizant of protecting confidentiality where necessary. When sources are described as “confidential” or not expressly named herein, the Panel has determined that disclosing their identity would present a credible threat to their safety. When a confidential military source is referred to herein as a “senior” officer or commander, the source holds a rank between lieutenant colonel and brigadier general. When a confidential military source is referred to as a “high-ranking” officer or commander, the source holds a rank of major general or above. A document is described as confidential when its disclosure could compromise the safety of the source or otherwise compromise ongoing Panel investigations.

9. To gather, examine and analyse information regarding the supply, sale or transfer of arms and related materiel, as mandated in resolution 2353 (2017), the Panel has used a combination of inspections of arms and equipment, photographs, other visual evidence, assessments of documentation and interviews with first-hand sources. In the absence of an arms embargo, formal inspections of weapons stockpiles were not possible.

C. Cooperation with international organizations and other stakeholders

10. While the Panel operates independently of United Nations agencies and institutions, it nonetheless expresses its gratitude to the leadership and personnel of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan, together with other United Nations staff in Addis Ababa, Kampala and Nairobi, for their invaluable support.

11. As at 27 October 2017, the Panel had sent 57 items of official correspondence to 37 recipients, including Member States, organizations and other entities, and had received 22 replies providing the information requested.

II. Conflict summary

12. The period since the renewal of the Panel’s mandate in May has been marked by the continuation of conflict-related trends already noted in its earlier reports to the Security Council: active fighting continues in diverse locations around the country, with the consequences of violence, impunity and predatory activities endured largely by civilians, and the economic situation continues to worsen, as various conflict actors move deeper into a “war economy”, wherein the extraction of resources (oil, gold and teak, inter alia) is carried out in the furtherance of, and in parallel to, military operations and the enrichment of elites. Those who can flee the violence continue to do so, leading to increased flows of internally displaced persons and refugees and, for the majority of South Sudanese, increased exposure to food insecurity, disease, family and community dissolution and disrupted education.

13. Despite these increasingly fragmented and disruptive trends, there are clear examples that the senior leadership of the Government and, to a lesser degree, opposition groups, continue to exercise command and control of important tactical and strategic issues. The dismissal of General Paul Malong by the President, Salva Kiir, and his capture and detention by the National Security Service in May 2017 represented a carefully planned and executed operation. It also illustrated the centrality of the Service and its head, Lieutenant General Akol Koor Kuc, who

coordinated the operation that prevented Malong from reaching Aweil, to the President's strategy for suppressing potential rivals.¹

14. Command and control, particularly in relation to the National Security Service, is also demonstrated by the complex network of impediments to both humanitarian and peacekeeping operations. The Panel has documented, in extensive interviews and reports of organizations and individuals working in South Sudan, that the combined constraints from ever-increasing bureaucracy, taxes, personnel detentions, harassment, threats, access denials and violence are systematic. The foreseeable and, in the Panel's assessment, intended consequence of those impediments is unequivocally clear: humanitarian aid and operations to protect civilians from violence are often unable to achieve their aims. As demonstrated below with reference to obstruction in Western Bahr el-Ghazal and Upper Nile, it is equally clear that this network of impediments is not the product of confusion and misunderstanding or caused by the failure of aid operations and the peacekeeping mission to communicate effectively with local authorities. Rather, the systematic nature of the impediments reveals a clear tactic to constrain humanitarian efforts and peacekeeping operations in order to prevent effective operations, conceal gross violations of human rights and co-opt resources from international donors towards the war effort.²

15. While there is evidence that all armed groups have, at times, engaged in obstruction tactics, it is the Government that is largely responsible for such systematic obstruction. In subsequent sections of the present report, the Panel illustrates this through evidence from Western Bahr el-Ghazal and Upper Nile. These areas are located on opposite sides of the country and exhibit different conflict dynamics, yet the manipulation of aid and the denial of access by government forces at critical moments have been constant factors in each location. This is particularly the case in the greater Bagari area, near Wau, where denial of aid by the Government has caused extreme food insecurity among large sections of the population, with malnutrition and death by starvation the documented outcome.

16. With regard to opposition forces, Riek Machar continues to maintain overall command of the operations of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in Opposition, although his isolation in South Africa has limited to some degree his day-to-day oversight. Given the significant gains made by government forces in opposition-held areas, the apparent continued lack of significant military resupply to opposition forces and some defections from SPLA in Opposition to other opposition groups, Machar's influence over his forces has been seriously undermined. Meanwhile, Thomas Cirillo Swaka continues to attempt to build influence for the National Salvation Front, in particular in Central Equatoria. National Salvation Front and SPLA in Opposition forces have engaged in small-scale confrontations in recent months in the wake of defections from the latter to the former, in particular to the faction led by John Kenyi Loburon in July 2017.³

17. Absent a change in the current conflict dynamics, the coming dry season is likely to see an escalation in the fighting and associated civilian suffering in many areas, including but not limited to Eastern Equatoria, Jonglei, Upper Nile and Unity, as the Government continues to pursue military victory over political compromise.

¹ The Panel was in Juba the week prior to Paul Malong's dismissal and bases its findings regarding the role played by Akol Koor Kuc on interviews with senior South Sudanese political and military figures with first-hand knowledge of the situation.

² Two examples through which the Government has sought to co-opt resources are the looting of the World Food Programme (WFP) warehouse in Juba in July 2016 (S/2016/793, para. 39) and the levy of excessive fees on work permits for foreign non-governmental organization workers (S/2017/326, para. 89).

³ Interview with General Thomas Cirillo Swaka, Addis Ababa, August 2017.

III. Regional developments

A. Peace initiatives

18. The regional peace and political reconciliation processes described in the Panel's report of 20 September 2017 (S/2017/789, para. 29) remain the primary international efforts to stem the violence and ultimately end the civil war in South Sudan. Since that report was published, diplomatic efforts by some regional States have intensified in an attempt to advance the establishment by IGAD of the high-level revitalization forum. The aim of the forum is to resuscitate the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan of August 2015 (S/2015/654, annex), following the collapse of the transitional government in July 2016. Yet circumstances on the ground have evolved significantly since the Agreement was signed more than two years ago,⁴ and while IGAD has embarked on wide-ranging consultations with numerous stakeholders in South Sudan, including the Government and opposition groups (Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) in Opposition, the former detainees and other opposition leaders based outside South Sudan), the underlying rivalries, competing interests and differing preferences among regional States over how to resolve the conflict remain significant obstacles to peace.⁵

19. Participants in the pre-forum consultations have reiterated the challenges facing IGAD in its efforts to salvage the Agreement. Amid ongoing fighting, there remains deep disagreement among the parties regarding the underlying purpose of the high-level revitalization forum. There are questions as to whether the forum will make the Agreement more inclusive or merely lend legitimacy to a Government that, in the eyes of many opposition groups, is illegitimate. Moreover, there is a lack of clarity over how the forum will achieve its aims.⁶ These factors present significant hurdles to tangible progress.

20. Government representatives and opposition groups, despite expressing support for the high-level revitalization forum in meetings with implementers,⁷ have voiced reservations about its objectives and harbour low expectations of any meaningful outcomes.⁸ The Government's attempts to exclude some opposition groups from the forum became evident following tensions over the modalities for the pre-forum consultations. In a letter dated 6 October 2017 from the Government to the Juba liaison office of IGAD, the Minister of Cabinet Affairs, Martin Elia Lomuro, stated

⁴ Riek Machar remains in exile in South Africa, where he continues to exercise command and control over some elements of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) in Opposition, defectors from SPLM/A in Opposition and the Government have formed new political movements, some with associated armed elements, and the conflict has spread to new areas, most notably the greater Equatoria region.

⁵ In his briefing to the Security Council on 26 September 2017, the Chairperson of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission, Festus Mogae, indicated that he had no basis on which to report that any progress had been made in the implementation of the peace process. See S/PV.8056.

⁶ Interviews with three South Sudanese former ministers and opposition members (Nairobi), a representative of South Sudanese civil society (Pretoria) and a South Sudanese neutral observer working with an international organization (Nairobi), September and October 2017.

⁷ See, for example, Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), "IGAD started the consultation on the high-level revitalization forum with parties to the Agreement and estranged groups", 3 October 2017. Available from www.igad.int/programs/115-south-sudan-office/1667-igad-started-the-consultation-on-the-high-level-revitalization-forum-with-parties-to-the-agreement-and-estranged-groups.

⁸ Interviews with three South Sudanese former ministers and opposition members (Nairobi), a representative of South Sudanese civil society (Pretoria) and several representatives of South Sudanese opposition groups (Nairobi and Kampala), July, August and September 2017.

that the idea to consult the parties separately implied that the Transitional Government of National Unity did not exist, that the Agreement was indeed dead and, further, that the revitalization forum was "intended to resuscitate it, as stated many times by anti-peace South Sudanese politicians and their supporters".⁹ Similarly, a communiqué issued by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) in Opposition faction led by the First Vice-President, Taban Deng Gai, after a meeting of the Political Bureau Plus chaired by Deng Gai on 5 October 2017, outlined the readiness of the group to be consulted as members of a single Government, not as a separate party to the Agreement.

21. Representatives of former detainees currently serving in the Government, however, object to its interpretation of the approach taken by IGAD to the consultations and do not believe that separately consulting parties will undermine the implementation of the Agreement.¹⁰ Other opposition groups, including the SPLM in Opposition faction led by Riek Machar and the Federal Democratic Party led by Gabriel Changson, have highlighted concerns regarding the Government's insistence that the forum is not a renegotiation of the peace agreement and that that notion has made its way into the narrative of both the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission and the Council of Ministers of IGAD.¹¹ They have also expressed unease over what appears to be the Government's narrow understanding of the forum as a "progress review exercise" on the Agreement that should not revisit any of its provisions, despite the differing positions and interests of the other parties.

22. The parties' reservations about the revitalization forum notwithstanding, they continue to engage with its implementers, in large part out of fear of being labelled "spoilers" and possibly becoming subject to unilateral, regional and/or international sanctions. Since the Peace and Security Council of the African Union signalled its readiness on 22 September 2017 to sanction those denying peace in South Sudan, many South Sudanese stakeholders appear to have improved their formal, albeit not substantive, engagement with the forum.¹²

23. Aside from the high-level revitalization forum, other regional peace initiatives have made little progress. The efforts led by the President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, to reunify the SPLM have stalled, owing to a lack of political will by the Government of South Sudan (see para. 28 below).¹³ Kenya hosted initial meetings of opposition parties during the week of 16 October 2017, in an effort to forge greater unity among a diverse set of these groups, but the path forward for the process

⁹ See Sudan Tribune, "South Sudan peace partners split over IGAD consultation", 9 October 2017. Available from www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article63713.

¹⁰ Letter from the former detainees to the Juba liaison office of IGAD, 7 October 2017.

¹¹ The idea that the high-level revitalization forum is not a renegotiation has been consistently propagated by government ministers such as Martin Elia Lomuro and Ezekiel Lol Gatkuoth and is also a consistent part of the messages promulgated by the chairs of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission and of the Council of Ministers of IGAD. See Xinhuanet, "East Africa bloc says [it] seeks to shore up South Sudan peace process", 25 July 2017; Radio Tamazuj, "Government says no review of peace deal decided at IGAD summit", 13 June 2017; and the statement by the Chairperson of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission to the Security Council on 20 July 2017 (see S/PRV 8008).

¹² Interviews with confidential diplomatic sources and independent analysts, June, August and September 2017; and the communiqué of the 720th meeting of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, held at the ministerial level on the situation in South Sudan, in New York on 20 September 2017 (para. 20 (vii)), available from www.peaceau.org/en/article/communique-of-the-720th-meeting-of-the-psc-at-the-ministerial-level-on-the-situation-in-south-sudan.

¹³ Interviews with three South Sudanese former ministers and opposition members (Nairobi), a representative of South Sudanese civil society (Pretoria) and various South Sudanese opposition representatives (Nairobi and Kampala), July, August and September 2017.

remains unclear.¹⁴ These additional forums, with their diverse backing and varying approaches to resolving the conflict, have made it easy for the opposition groups and the Government to continue to exploit the resultant lack of regional consensus through what may be termed “forum shopping”.

B. Differing regional interests

24. Regional economic, security and political concerns continue to undermine consensus on how to resolve the conflict, as the Government and opposition groups are aware of regional actors’ attachments to their own interests and exploit those attachments to their benefit. Uganda has been most directly involved in and affected by the war, with more than 1 million South Sudanese refugees now living there,¹⁵ straining the country’s infrastructure, security and economic stability. South Sudan is an important trading partner for Uganda, and the downward economic spiral in South Sudan as a result of the conflict has negatively affected Ugandan plans to attain middle-income economy status by 2020.¹⁶ Yet Uganda has not maximized its leverage with South Sudan, as it could by, for example, refusing to allow arms shipments to the SPLA to transit through Ugandan territory, so as to press the Government to halt military operations and focus seriously on advancing an inclusive political dialogue. Furthermore, the Ugandan rivalry with Ethiopia for regional hegemony and influence within South Sudan has also affected the President’s calculations: Uganda is more invested in the Kampala-led SPLM reunification process than in the IGAD-led high level revitalization forum, which, according to Panel sources, is viewed by the Ugandan authorities as an Ethiopia-driven initiative.¹⁷

25. Similarly, Kenya has significant financial interests in South Sudan. In particular, the Kenyan (along with the Ugandan) banking and real estate sectors are key destinations for financial assets and laundered funds from South Sudan.¹⁸ The Kenyan role in regional peacebuilding has diminished significantly owing to internal challenges associated with the elections in 2017. Nonetheless, mounting insecurity in bordering Eastern Equatoria, the resulting potential for increased refugee flows and the continued possibility of armed groups attacking and looting poorly secured Kenyan banks in South Sudan, in particular Kenya Commercial Bank and Ivory Bank branches, as occurred in Bentiu and Bor,¹⁹ are strong motivations for Kenya to remain actively engaged in South Sudan.

26. The Sudan is seemingly more focused on other regional concerns, such as the impact of heightened tensions between Qatar and other Persian Gulf States, and preoccupied with securing the permanent lifting of some sanctions imposed by the

¹⁴ Jason Patinkin, “South Sudan opposition groups meet in Kenya to ‘harmonize voices’”, Reuters, 16 October 2017.

¹⁵ For the latest figures on the situation of South Sudanese refugees living in Uganda, see the information-sharing portal of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Available from <http://data.unhcr.org/SouthSudan/country.php?id=229>

¹⁶ See National Planning Authority of Uganda, “Roadmap to attaining middle income status for Uganda”. Available from <http://npa.ug/wp-content/uploads/ROADMAP-MIDDLE-INCOME-STATUS-FOR-UGANDA.pdf>.

¹⁷ Panel correspondence with international diplomats and regional political analysts.

¹⁸ See, for example, the report of The Sentry, entitled “War crimes shouldn’t pay: stopping the looting and destruction in South Sudan”, September 2016.

¹⁹ The looting of Kenya Commercial Bank and Ivory Bank branches in Bentiu occurred on 3 January 2014. The Bor branch of the Kenya Commercial Bank was looted on 26 December 2013.

United States.²⁰ Ethiopia is similarly focused on other pressing issues, notably the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam on the Nile. The dam has escalated tensions over water rights between Ethiopia and Egypt, and the deepening ties between Egypt and South Sudan²¹ have further complicated this rivalry.²²

27. Owing in large part to those competing agendas and distractions, the Uganda-led SPLM reunification process, the Kenyan efforts with opposition groups and the high-level revitalization forum are neither complementary nor mutually reinforcing initiatives, despite assertions to the contrary.²³ Notwithstanding the two-month deadline recently set by IGAD for establishing the forum,²⁴ the Panel's view is that, absent consensus at the Head of State level within IGAD over how to structure and, ultimately, achieve the desired outcome of the forum, backed by credible punitive measures, including targeted United Nations sanctions against those who exercise command and control over forces on the ground, it is unlikely to succeed in putting the implementation of the Agreement back on track.²⁵

C. Obstruction of peace efforts

28. The President of South Sudan and his loyalists have deliberately and consistently attempted to outmanoeuvre and frustrate regional and bilateral processes. A frequent tactic has been to introduce competing initiatives to divide stakeholder attention as a means to buy time to advance military objectives. In the SPLM reunification process led by the President of Uganda, for example, the President of South Sudan undermined the broader agenda by introducing a parallel process, purportedly seeking to mend his strained relationship with Rebecca Nyandeng, a former government minister and the widow of the SPLM founder, John Garang. Whether his efforts were genuine or not, he failed to co-opt Nyandeng but succeeded in frustrating the Ugandan efforts.²⁶

²⁰ The need for the Sudan to end destabilizing activities in South Sudan was an important precondition for the partial lifting, on 6 October 2017, of sanctions imposed by the United States of America on the Sudan. See United States Department of State, "Senior administration officials on Sudan sanctions: special briefing", 6 October 2017. Available from www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2017/10/274678.htm.

²¹ To date in 2017, there has been a warming of relations between South Sudan and Egypt. In January 2017, the President of South Sudan, Salva Kiir, embarked on a State visit to Egypt during which various bilateral issues were discussed with the President of Egypt, Abdel Fattah El Sisi. This visit was followed by a donation of humanitarian aid from Egypt to South Sudan in June 2017. While presenting the items, the Assistant Foreign Affairs Minister of Egypt for Sudan and South Sudan, Ahmed Fadel Yacoub, described the gesture as "a symbol of the close and historic ties between Egypt and South Sudan". See *Juba Monitor*, "Egypt donates humanitarian aid", 13 June 2017.

²² Interviews with a former minister of South Sudan (Nairobi), a South Sudanese academic (Pretoria), an independent analyst (Addis Ababa) and members of the international diplomatic community in New York and the region, July and August 2017.

²³ Interviews with civil society actors, independent analysts and South Sudanese experts, September and October 2017.

²⁴ Radio Tamazuj, "IGAD team sets deadline for peace revitalization after meeting Kiir", 13 October 2017.

²⁵ Regional actors also convey divergent messages concerning the situation in South Sudan. Despite attempting to project a unified position on the exile of Rick Machar to South Africa, countries such as the Sudan, for example, insist that the rebel leader has a role to play in the search for peace in his country. The absence of a united voice has led the Chairperson of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission and other stakeholders to repeatedly advocate that actors speak with one voice. Multiple South Sudanese opposition groups share this view. Interviews with various South Sudanese opposition groups, July, August and September 2017; and the Chairperson's statement of 20 July 2017 to the Security Council (see S/PV.8008).

²⁶ Interviews with various members of the former detainees involved in the process, August 2017.

29. Since becoming First Vice-President, Taban Deng Gai has sought to marginalize his predecessor, Riek Machar, and project himself nationally and internationally as a legitimate and credible alternative.²⁷ His closest ally in the Government is the Minister of Petroleum, Ezekiel Lol Gatkuoth, a United States citizen who represented the SPLM in that country before South Sudan declared independence in 2011 and then aligned himself with Machar when the civil war began in 2013. Deng Gai and Gatkuoth have sided with the President in attempts to keep Machar isolated internationally, formed militias to attack SPLA in Opposition fighters on the ground, intimidated and silenced Machar's supporters and other government opponents and thwarted regional efforts to make the political process more inclusive.²⁸ During the Panel's meeting with Deng Gai, Gatkuoth and the Minister of Defence and Veterans' Affairs, Kuol Manyang Juuk, held in Juba on 12 September 2017, Deng Gai described the humanitarian and security situation on the ground as improving, despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary (S/2017/821, paras. 144–152),²⁹ while Gatkuoth echoed critiques of the high-level revitalization forum previously made by the President, Martin Lomuro and others, questioning the intent of IGAD and emphasizing that the Agreement should not be open for reinterpretation or renegotiation.

30. In its report of April 2017, the Panel highlighted actions by the National Security Service to clamp down on opposition activities in the region through intimidation, forced repatriation and kidnapping (S/2017/326, para. 38). Further investigations by the Panel indicate that the Service, under the direction of Lieutenant General Akol Koor Kuc, has continued to intimidate and harass opposition figures and dissidents in neighbouring countries. On 18 August 2017, South Sudanese security operatives in Kampala, working in cooperation with elements of the Ugandan security services, attempted to forcibly detain the deputy military spokesperson of the SPLA in Opposition, Gabriel Lam. A National Security Service officer, Joseph Ochora, attached to the South Sudanese embassy in Kampala engaged the services of five Ugandan security officers to carry out the operation, albeit unofficially.³⁰ Although the operation failed, its planning and attempted execution echo previous operations carried out by the Service abroad, such as the disappearance in January 2017 of two South Sudanese citizens in Nairobi: Aggrey Idri, a member of the SPLM/A in Opposition, and Dong Samuel Luak, a prominent South Sudanese human rights lawyer (S/2017/326, para. 39).

31. National Security Service operatives have also targeted political activists in the diaspora and journalists, including South Sudanese reporters. In one specific case, the Service blocked the passport renewal of John Tanza Mabusu, a South Sudanese journalist with Voice of America, based in Washington, D.C., alleging that his reporting of the conflict was "anti-Government".³¹ Other international

²⁷ In his update to the President of the Security Council in June 2017, the First Vice-President, Taban Deng Gai, stated that "engagement of the ... Council with Riek Machar is tantamount to an insult to the misery and lost lives of innocent people who are victims of the barbaric acts of Riek Machar and his criminals". Radio Tamazuj, "Taban Deng urges United Nations Security Council to desist from talking to Machar", 5 June 2017.

²⁸ Interviews conducted with multiple opposition and government sources in Juba, Kampala and Nairobi, September and October 2017.

²⁹ According to the report cited (para. 145), Deng Gai's allied forces recruited about 207 of the 1,022 children used in combat in South Sudan between January and December 2016. That recruitment was part of a drive by Deng Gai to establish a militia to rival Machar's Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in Opposition forces and to conduct military operations in Upper Nile and Unity.

³⁰ Interviews with SPLA in Opposition leaders in Kampala, September 2017.

³¹ John Tanza Mabusu's passport renewal remains blocked by the National Security Service. Interview with Tanza, October 2017.

journalists have been temporarily detained, deported or refused entry. In recent months, according to multiple sources, including four of the affected journalists, the Media Authority of South Sudan had either failed to approve or cancelled the accreditation of at least 20 foreign journalists, effectively banning them from the country. These journalists, many of whom have extensive experience reporting in South Sudan, represent some of the largest news organizations in the world. Interviews by the Panel with some of those journalists indicate that the Managing Director of the Media Authority, Elijah Alier Kuai, working under the direction of both the Minister of Information, Communication Technology and Postal Services (and official spokesperson for the Government of South Sudan), Michael Makuei Lueth, and the National Security Service Director, Akol Koor Kuc, has played a leading role in implementing restrictions on international journalists.³²

32. In August 2017, a freelance journalist, Christopher Allen, was killed during fighting in Kaia, near the Ugandan border. According to opposition sources, he had been embedded with opposition forces during an attack on government positions.³³ Reports regarding the circumstances of his death have been conflicting, with SPLA in Opposition sources alleging that he had been deliberately targeted, despite his wearing identification indicating that he was a member of the press, an assertion that the Government has denied.³⁴ Makuei Lueth lent weight to the conclusion that Allen had been deliberately targeted, however, claiming that Allen was a rebel and that "he attacked the town together with the rebels and he was killed in the line of the rebels" before later contradicting his initial claims.³⁵

33. On the opposition side, despite the assertion by the Machar-led faction of the SPLM in Opposition that it was ready to welcome political processes that would bring about peace, Machar and his followers have repeatedly rejected invitations to attend meetings with IGAD and other regional actors focused on ending the war. SPLM/A in Opposition sources told the Panel that they would not be able to join such processes as long as their leader was still held in South Africa.³⁶ Yet Machar met a delegation from IGAD in Pretoria on 4 October 2017 to discuss the high-level revitalization forum, in a meeting described by his group as "very successful".³⁷ Machar's sudden reversal is consistent with past patterns during negotiations in South Sudan, where participation — even if the process is flawed — is the price to pay to avoid being labelled a spoiler and inviting isolation from the region and the international community.

³² The Panel spoke with five journalists about their experiences with regard to restrictions on and impediments to reporting in South Sudan. The role of National Security Service personnel and Michael Makuei Lueth in those restrictions was a consistent point in all the accounts provided to the Panel.

³³ SPLA in Opposition statements to journalists, as noted in John Bowden, "American journalist killed in South Sudan", *Hill*, 26 August 2017, and Panel interview with SPLA in Opposition sources, Nairobi, September 2017.

³⁴ Nabeel Brajo, "South Sudan 'regrets' death of American journalist", *Voice of America News*, 30 August 2017.

³⁵ *Ibid*.

³⁶ Interviews conducted with multiple SPLM/A in Opposition sources, Nairobi, Kampala and Pretoria, July, August, September and October 2017.

³⁷ Sudan Tribune, "Machar's meeting with IGAD revitalization team 'fruitful' official," 6 October 2017.

IV. Ethnic violence and the humanitarian crisis

A. Denial of food assistance in Wau as a weapon of war

34. Throughout 2016 and 2017, the SPLA counter-insurgency campaign in Wau and in the surrounding areas in Western Bahr el-Ghazal has targeted civilians on ethnic grounds, internally displacing over 100,000 people,³⁸ destroying assets and livelihoods and precipitating a major humanitarian emergency (S/2016/793, para. 16). As aid agencies have attempted to mount a response to alleviate and prevent the further deterioration of humanitarian conditions, the Government has systematically denied access to the population in need. It is the view of the Panel that the Government has, during much of 2017, deliberately prevented lifesaving food assistance from reaching some citizens. Such actions amount to using food as a weapon of war, with the intent to inflict suffering on civilians whom the Government views as opponents to its agenda. The denial of aid has caused extreme food insecurity among large sections of the population, the documented outcome being malnutrition and death by starvation, in particular in the greater Bagari area in Wau County.³⁹

35. Political and economic calculations are the driving force behind decades of ethnic violence between the Fertit and Dinka communities in and around Wau.⁴⁰ The United Nations, human rights researchers and journalists have all documented human rights abuses perpetrated against Fertit civilians by the SPLA and its associated Dinka militias.⁴¹ From December 2015 to August 2017, SPLA forces in Wau County were under the command of Major General Thayip (Thiab) Gatluak Taitai.⁴² The Panel has previously outlined his responsibility for targeting civilians along ethnic lines in southern Unity in 2015 (S/2016/70, para. 48). SPLA forces in Wau County fall under the SPLA Sector 1 Commander, a position held until May 2017 by Lieutenant General Gabriel Jok Riak.⁴³ The Committee sanctioned Jok Riak on 1 July 2015 for his role in the expansion of the conflict through breaches of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities between the Government of the Republic of

³⁸ As an indicator of displacement, as at 30 September 2017, 101,337 people had been internally displaced across Western Bahr el-Ghazal. See Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "South Sudan: humanitarian snapshot", September 2017. Available from https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/SS_20171011_Humanitarian_Snapshot_September.pdf.

³⁹ This assessment draws on numerous sources with extensive, first-hand knowledge of the situation, who spoke with the Panel on condition that they remained confidential. Interviews conducted by the Panel in Juba in September 2017 and by email and telephone in September and October 2017.

⁴⁰ Economic tensions have centred on land, as Dinka cattle herders move with their cattle from nearby areas in search of fertile grazing lands, impinging on Fertit farmland. In terms of political tensions, the Fertit have felt marginalized by the Juba regime.

⁴¹ United Nations News Centre, "South Sudan: UN peacekeepers continue protecting civilians amid tense situation in town of Wau", 20 December 2012 (available from www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56609&Wgn61VtSxph), and "Accountability for rights abuses in South Sudan 'more important than ever', says senior UN official", 23 April 2017 (available from www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56609&Wgn61VtSxph); Human Rights Watch, "South Sudan: civilians killed, tortured in western region", 24 May 2016, and Richard Nield, "Wau displaced tell of death and horrifying escapes", Al Jazeera, 21 December 2016.

⁴² Thayip (Thiab) Gatluak Taitai was appointed Commander of the local Division 5 of the SPLA in December 2015 and rotated out in August 2017. Shortly after his appointment, additional Dinka troops were deployed to the area from Northern Bahr el-Ghazal and Warrap.

⁴³ See the list of sanctioned individuals, entities and other groups, established and maintained pursuant to Security Council resolution 2206 (2015), available from <https://sanctions.un.org/fop/fop.xml?htdocs/resources/xml/en/consolidated.xml&xslt=htdocs/resources/xsl/en/southsudan.xsl>.

South Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (in Opposition) of January 2014.

36. SPLA forces began targeting Fertit civilians in and around Wau County in early 2016, as a counter-insurgency tactic during the campaign against SPLA in Opposition forces. In April 2016, SPLA forces deployed Mi-24 attack helicopters in Wau town, an action that the Panel had previously concluded would not have occurred without approval from senior South Sudanese officials, including the then SPLA Chief of General Staff, General Paul Malong (S/2016/793, para. 9).⁴⁴ On 24 June 2016, violence broke out in Wau town, as SPLA forces attacked civilians living in mainly Fertit neighbourhoods (S/2016/793, para. 16),⁴⁵ displacing some 80,000 people both within the town and to the opposition-controlled greater Bagari area to the south and south-west.⁴⁶ Civilians in the greater Bagari area experienced some of the worst fighting, as SPLA elements engaged in extrajudicial killings, committed widespread sexual violence, looted homes and livestock and destroyed crops.⁴⁷

37. In April 2017, SPLA forces conducted violent reprisals in Wau for the killing of two of its officers in an ambush outside the town.⁴⁸ The violence gave rise to a second major wave of displacement, leading to an additional 22,000–25,000 people being driven from their homes, as estimated by humanitarian agencies.⁴⁹ Fighting was reported outside Wau town as recently as July 2017 (S/2017/784, para. 23),⁵⁰ but UNMISS indicated a slight reduction in violence in mid-September.⁵¹ At the start of October, the newly appointed Governor of Wau, Angelo Taban Biajo, publicly apologized over "mistakes" committed by previous government officials, referring to the violence against civilians committed by SPLA forces under Jok Riak's command.⁵² However, the Panel has seen no evidence of any meaningful steps taken by the SPLA senior command or the civilian authorities towards

⁴⁴ See also Radio Tamazuj, "Eyewitnesses: government helicopters hovered over Wau town after reported clashes", 7 April 2016.

⁴⁵ Interviews conducted with confidential human rights sources, in Nairobi and by telephone, between August and November 2016, and Human Rights Watch, "South Sudan: civilians killed, tortured in western region", 24 May 2016.

⁴⁶ See International Organization for Migration, "Fighting in Wau, South Sudan, triggers spike in humanitarian needs", press release, 28 June 2016, available from www.iom.int/news/fighting-wau-south-sudan-triggers-spike-humanitarian-needs, and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), "South Sudan: Wau humanitarian situation update", No. 3, 29 June 2016, available from <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UNICEF%20South%20Sudan%20Wau%20humanitarian%20Situation%20Update%20%23%20-%2029%20June%202016.pdf>.

⁴⁷ Confidential humanitarian report on file with the Panel.

⁴⁸ Three WFP contractors were killed in the violence. See WFP, "WFP condemns killing of three workers in Wau, South Sudan", news release, 14 April 2017, available from www.wfp.org/news/news-release/wfp-condemns-killing-three-workers-wau-south-sudan, and Radio Tamazuj, "Death toll in Wau violence rises to 31", 21 April 2017.

⁴⁹ REACH, "Wau County: food security and livelihood profile", May–July 2017. Available from https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/reach_ssd_food_security_and_livelihoods_profile_wau_county_may_to_july_2017.pdf.

⁵⁰ The President declared a state of emergency for Wau in July 2017, following clashes between rival Dinka groups. S/2017/789, para. 12.

⁵¹ United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), "Wau could provide 'model' for return home of South Sudan's displaced people", press release, 14 September 2017. Available from unmiss.unmissions.org/wau-could-provide-model-return-home-south-sudan-s-displaced-people.

⁵² Radio Tamazuj, "New Wau Governor apologizes to citizens," 3 October 2017.

ensuring accountability for abuses committed by SPLA units during the military campaign.³²

38. While humanitarian conditions have steadily deteriorated for civilians in and around Wau, humanitarian operations have also been regularly disrupted.³³ Based on its investigations, the Panel concludes that the Government has regularly denied humanitarian actors access to certain parts of the population, in particular in the areas outside Wau town. The greater Bagari area is especially noteworthy for the persistent and systematic nature of the Government's access denials and for the catastrophic humanitarian conditions that have resulted.

39. Even before the major spikes of violence of June 2016 and April 2017, civilians in the greater Bagari area faced severe food insecurity. In May 2016, a humanitarian assessment mission found that some 21,400 civilians had been displaced by the violence of February 2016. The assessment mission observed burned-out homes and villages and people eating wild roots and leaves, as their food stocks had been looted or depleted.³⁴ Notwithstanding this food insecurity and the foreseeable impact on civilians, SPLA forces — under the command of Jok Riak — only sporadically allowed food distributions to the area between mid-June 2016 and August 2017.³⁵ During one such rare humanitarian mission in January 2017, internally displaced persons reported that they were living in the bush, as they feared attacks on towns, and women reported sexual violence on the road to Wau town and at checkpoints. Owing to food scarcity, many were eating only once a day and relying on wild plants.³⁶ Nonetheless, the Government did not allow food

³² The Government sent an "investigation committee" to Wau that produced a report on the June 2016 violence. On 25 July 2016, two SPLA soldiers were executed for killing civilians in the June 2016 violence. In April 2017, the President ordered the perpetrators of violence to be arrested. However when the Human Rights Director of UNMISS visited two weeks after the violence, he found that no one had been detained. The Panel has sent a letter to the Government as part of the preparation of the present report, to verify whether any further steps have been taken. See Rick Gai Kok and others, "Report of the investigation committee on Wau incident of 24-26 June 2016", report submitted to the President of South Sudan, 1 August 2016, available from <https://radiotamazuj.org/uploads/media/58efad0639319.pdf>, Radio Tamazuj, "Two SPLA soldiers executed by firing squad for killings in Wau", 25 July 2016, Africanews, "South Sudan President Kier orders arrest of perpetrators of recent violence", 12 April 2017, and UNMISS, "Accountability for abuses remains one of biggest challenges in South Sudan says UNMISS Human Rights Director", interview with the Human Rights Director, 23 April 2017, available from <https://unmiss.unmissions.org/accountability-abuses-remains-one-biggest-challenges-south-sudan-says-unmiss-human-rights-director>.

³³ For example, from April to July 2017, humanitarian aid agencies suspended food distributions outside the Wau site for the protection of civilians, owing to insecurity, thus significantly limiting the geographical reach of assistance. See REACH, "Wau County: food security and livelihood profile", May–July 2017.

³⁴ See Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Inter-agency rapid needs assessment report: greater Bagari area", 20 May 2016 available from https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/160623_baggari_irna_report.pdf, and "Humanitarian Bulletin: South Sudan", No. 7, 30 May 2017, available from https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/160530_OCHA_SouthSudan_hb7.pdf.

³⁵ See Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian Bulletin: South Sudan", No. 3, 17 February 2017, available from https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/170217_OCHA_SouthSudan_Humanitarian_Bulletin_3.pdf, and "South Sudan: humanitarian access snapshot", August 2017, available from https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/SS_20170909_Access_Snapshot_August_final_0.pdf.

³⁶ See Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian Bulletin: South Sudan", No. 3, 17 February 2017.

distributions by road until 11 March 2017,⁵⁸ blocking humanitarian actors from reaching vulnerable populations by restricting aid agencies' movements, intimidating and harassing agency staff at checkpoints and fostering a climate of general insecurity that rendered the delivery of assistance impossible.⁵⁹ Subsequently, access was allowed only by means of far more costly air operations, thereby further exacerbating the food insecurity crisis.⁶⁰

40. In August 2017, for the first time in over a year, the Government eased access restrictions to the greater Bagari area, and humanitarian organizations were able to provide a broad distribution of food and lifesaving assistance to more than 12,000 people.⁶¹ Internally displaced persons described forcible relocation by government forces, resulting in dozens to hundreds of people dying from starvation during repeated marches on foot to safer locations. The assessment team documented burned and looted villages and destroyed crops⁶² and noted that internally displaced persons had no tools or seeds, leaving them unable to use the August–September rainy season for cultivation.⁶³ Several humanitarian organizations, including the World Food Programme,⁶⁴ witnessed significantly high levels of malnutrition, with high rates of severe acute malnutrition.⁶⁵ Another assessment mission found that 164 young children and older persons had died from hunger and disease between January and September 2017.⁶⁶

⁵⁸ See Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "South Sudan: humanitarian access snapshot", March 2017, available from https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/170407_ssd_access_snapshot_march.pdf, and UNHCR, Operational update on South Sudan, No. 5, 1–15 March 2017, available from <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UNHCR%20SSD%20Operational%20Update%20No%205%20-%201-15%20March%202017.pdf>

⁵⁹ Throughout November and December 2016 and January 2017, there were multiple reports of aid workers being denied access to areas outside Wau town. See Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "South Sudan: humanitarian access situation snapshot", November and December 2016 and January 2017. Available from https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ss_161207_november_accesssnapshot_0.pdf, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/170125_december2016_accesssnapshot.pdf and https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/170216_access_snapshot_january_2017.pdf

⁶⁰ See Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian Bulletin: South Sudan", No. 15, 10 October 2017. Available from https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/SS_171010_OCHA_SouthSudan_Humanitarian_Bulletin15.pdf

⁶¹ From conversations with confidential sources from the United Nations and humanitarian organizations, the Panel concludes that the situation with regard to access has significantly improved at this time. The Panel will monitor the situation to confirm whether this is a sustained trend. See also Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "South Sudan: humanitarian access snapshot", August 2017; and "Humanitarian Bulletin: South Sudan", No. 15, 10 October 2017.

⁶² In 2017 specifically, crops were destroyed during cultivation time, and thousands forced to flee before they could harvest, further exacerbating food insecurity.

⁶³ REACH, "Wau County: food security and livelihood profile", May–July 2017.

⁶⁴ This was the first time WFP and its partners responded in the greater Bagari area since operations had to be suspended following the detaining of WFP staff in late April 2017. See WFP, "South Sudan: situation report, No. 195, 22 September 2017. Available from <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/WFP%20South%20Sudan%20Situation%20Report%20%23195%20-%2022%20September%202017.pdf>

⁶⁵ See Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian Bulletin: South Sudan", No. 15, 10 October 2017; and UNICEF, "South Sudan: humanitarian situation report", 30 September 2017, available from www.unicef.org/appeals/files/UNICEF_South_Sudan_Humanitarian_SitRep_30_Sept_2017.pdf

⁶⁶ Confidential information seen by the Panel. The Panel has assessed the information and, based on the first-hand knowledge of the source and established provenance of the data, deems the report to be highly credible.

B. Ethnically targeted depopulation in Upper Nile and the threat of forced relocation

41. The Panel has documented the Government's repeated offensives against Johnson Olony's Agwelek militia on the west bank of the Nile since 2015, as well as violence against and forced displacement of Shilluk civilians in the area by SPLA forces (S/2017/789). In interviews conducted by the Panel at the end of August 2017, humanitarian aid workers estimated that fewer than 17,000 Shilluk remained in Upper Nile outside the Malakal protection of civilians site, concentrated mainly in camps for internally displaced persons in and around Aburoc. These people have fled multiple times to escape fighting moving across Upper Nile, as SPLA forces pushed the Agwelek militia from Malakal towards Kodok. Humanitarian agencies have tried to move their services in response to each new wave of displacement.⁶⁷

42. Conflict has intensified on the west bank of the Nile since January 2017, as SPLA forces have steadily pushed opposition forces northward, taking control of the main population centres in Panyikang and Fashoda counties. This has been reflected in the large number of people fleeing across the northern border into the Sudan. Between 1 January and 15 September 2017, 86,297 refugees fled into the Sudanese States of Southern Kordofan and White Nile, which border Fashoda and Panyikang.⁶⁸ In April 2017, such offensives culminated in SPLA forces taking control of Kodok. By then, much of the population had left the area in anticipation of that offensive, many having moved towards Aburoc or into the Sudan.⁶⁹

43. On 11 September, SPLA units clashed with SPLA in Opposition factions associated with Riek Machar and Johnson Olony (SPLA in Opposition Agwelek) near the village of Adodo, 15 km south of Aburoc. Government forces, together with members of the Shilluk Gar community who recently defected from Machar's SPLA in Opposition faction, allegedly attacked and then captured Adodo from SPLA in Opposition/Agwelek forces. On 12 September, fighting reached Aburoc and SPLA forces took control of the internally displaced persons camps. Given the fighting around Adodo, the local population and humanitarian aid workers anticipated the impending offensive, and the vast majority of civilians immediately left Aburoc to take refuge in the bush or in neighbouring villages. More than 30 humanitarian workers evacuated to Malakal.⁷⁰

44. On 14 September, the Governor of Fashoda, Altheb Okij,⁷¹ issued an ultimatum to civilians and humanitarian actors to leave Aburoc and move to Kodok within the coming seven days.⁷² The humanitarian aid community has interpreted the order as an attempt to forcibly return internally displaced persons to their homes, in violation of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.⁷³ The Government claimed that it would be in a better position to provide security in

⁶⁷ See Médecins sans frontières, "South Sudan: continuing displacement is the new reality for many along northern frontier", press release, 6 October 2017. Available from www.msf.org/en/article/south-sudan-continuing-displacement-new-reality-many-along-northern-frontier

⁶⁸ UNHCR, "Sudan: refugees from South Sudan", 15 October 2017. Available from <http://data.unhcr.org/SouthSudan/country.php?id=204>

⁶⁹ Panel interviews with confidential sources from the United Nations and humanitarian organizations, by telephone and in Juba, September 2017.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Altheb Okij, a former right hand of Johnson Olony, was recently appointed to his position by the First Vice-President.

⁷² It is important to note that local officials and the SPLA have previously attempted to restrict humanitarian access to populations in need in Upper Nile. See S/2016/70 and S/2017/326.

⁷³ Panel interviews with confidential humanitarian aid sources, Juba, September 2017, and correspondence with confidential humanitarian aid sources, October 2017.

Kodok, as it anticipated retaliatory attacks from the Machar faction of the SPLA in Opposition on Aburoc and the surrounding areas, and told the original inhabitants of Kodok and those with relatives in that town to return to their homes. For the rest, who came mainly from Panyikang County and Wau Shilluk, they indicated that they would set up a camp in Golo village, about 2 km north of Kodok town. The 30 km journey from Aburoc to Kodok is hazardous, given the possibility of landmines along the road. Under pressure from the United Nations and humanitarian agencies, the Fashoda authorities appear to have rescinded the Governor's ultimatum and, in the short term at least, agreed to a civilian and humanitarian presence in Aburoc. Humanitarian aid workers are currently providing services to about 15,000 civilians in Aburoc and the surrounding areas.⁷⁴

C. Land grabbing and natural resource exploitation in the Equatorias

45. Counter-insurgency operations conducted by SPLA forces and allied militias in the greater Equatoria area in 2016 and 2017 have displaced hundreds of thousands of civilians, including more than 400,000 internally and several hundred thousand more as refugees in Uganda. Equatorians have described a pattern of abuses by SPLA forces and the allied ethnic Dinka militia known as Mathiang Anyoor, including killings, arbitrary arrest and detention, rape and other forms of sexual violence, torture and the looting and destruction of property (S/2016/963 and S/2017/326).⁷⁵

46. Opposition forces operating in the Equatorias, notably the Machar faction of the SPLA in Opposition and the National Salvation Front led by the former SPLA Deputy Chief of Staff, General Thomas Cirillo Swaka, appear not to receive regular supplies of additional arms and ammunition and rely largely on materiel captured from clashes with the SPLA and its militia proxies. With the SPLA and the Mathiang Anyoor militia having pushed many Equatorians from their homes, and given the lack of resources limiting the ability of opposition groups to conduct operations, direct military confrontations between SPLA and opposition forces have been sporadic. This has not, however, provided relief for the civilians who remain, as SPLA elements who have not received a salary in months and opposition forces lacking resupply continue to prey on civilians. The pervasive insecurity around Yei, Central Equatoria, still largely prevents people from gaining access to their farms, while SPLA soldiers loot crops and sell them at inflated prices. Faced with the constant threat of violence, the civilians left in Yei are effectively trapped inside the town, with limited access to food and medical treatment.⁷⁶

47. With large swathes of the greater Equatoria area depopulated, heavily armed Dinka cattle herders are driving large herds into areas whence civilians had fled. Reports provided to the Panel indicate that some of those herds belong to senior

⁷⁴ See Médecins sans frontières, "South Sudan: continuing displacement is the new reality for many along northern frontier".

⁷⁵ See also UNMISS, "Human rights violations and abuses in Yei, July 2016–January 2017". Available from https://unmiss.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/report_human_rights_violations_and_abuses_in_yei_july_2016_to_january_2017_0.pdf; Human Rights Watch, "Soldiers Assume We Are Rebels": Escalating Violence and Abuses in South Sudan's Equatorias (2017); and Amnesty International, "If men are caught, they are killed, if women are caught, they are raped": South Sudan — atrocities in Equatoria region turn country's breadbasket into a killing field" (London, 2017).

⁷⁶ Two confidential sources. Documents held on file with the Panel. There is limited information about conditions for civilians in areas under opposition control, as few international organizations have consistent access to these areas.

figures in Juba.⁷⁷ Equatorians displaced by the violence have told international investigators that they viewed the increased presence of Dinka and their cattle as a "land grab".⁷⁸ On 23 October 2017, the State-owned television network, South Sudan Broadcasting Corporation, reported that the President had issued an order instructing SPLA forces to ensure the withdrawal of pastoralists and their cattle from the Equatorias.⁷⁹

48. In addition to grazing lands, the Equatorias are rich in natural resources that armed groups have historically exploited to finance military operations. During the civil war against the Government in Khartoum, the gold and teak trades were a source of SPLA funding.⁸⁰ With the South Sudanese economy in a downward spiral and opposition groups lacking an external patron, both the SPLA and the SPLA in Opposition have sought ways to benefit from gold and teak (a valuable hardwood found in relative abundance, particularly in Central and Western Equatoria). During its visit to Juba in September, the Panel received eyewitness reports of SPLA units guarding harvested teak trees near Lainya, Central Equatoria, where the hardwood trade in that area is centred. According to local community sources, teak traders pay SPLA in Opposition units for security in the forests where they harvest the teak, then pay protection money to SPLA units to move the harvested wood by road to Uganda, where it is exported.⁸¹ While teak companies are critical to local economies, where jobs are scarce, local officials have expressed concern over the weak oversight and increasingly haphazard regulation of the industry, which create opportunities for illicit trading by armed groups. The Governor of Yei River, David Lokonga Moses, has twice suspended teak logging operations in 2017 — in July and in October — citing the need for more coherent management and oversight of the sector.

49. The Panel has also received multiple reports of the country's increasing role in regional gold smuggling. As with teak, gold was an important source of revenue for the SPLA during the civil war with the Sudan.⁸² While two of the largest gold mining companies, United Kingdom-based Equator Gold and South Africa-based New Kush Exploration and Mining, have reportedly ceased formal exploration owing to insecurity, artisanal mining continues on a significant scale in many areas, including to the south-east of Yei and to the south and west of Bungu in Central Equatoria, to the south-east of Kapoeta in Eastern Equatoria along the border with Uganda and Kenya, and in smaller pockets of Western Equatoria, Jonglei and Upper Nile.⁸³ One assessment from 2016 estimated that as many as 60,000 people may be involved in artisanal mining.⁸⁴ Some sources have reported that some of the

⁷⁷ Interviews with confidential sources from the United Nations and non-governmental organizations, Juba, September 2017.

⁷⁸ Interviews with UNMISS, humanitarian and regional analysts, Juba, September 2017. One local SPLA commander told a regional analyst that he was unable to respond to complaints against cattle herders unless he had approval from Juba.

⁷⁹ Radio Tamazuj, "Kfir orders pastoralists to leave five Equatoria states", 25 October 2017.

⁸⁰ David K. Deng, "The new frontier: a baseline survey of large-scale land-based investment in Southern Sudan", Norwegian People's Aid, Available from <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/new-frontier-baseline-survey-large-scale-investment-southern-sudan>.

⁸¹ Two confidential sources. Documents held on file with the Panel.

⁸² Cortaid, "Mining in South Sudan: opportunities and risks for local communities — baseline assessment of small-scale and artisanal gold mining in central and eastern Equatoria states, South Sudan", January 2016. Available from www.cortaid.org/nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2016/03/South-Sudan-Gold-Mining-Report-IR-1.pdf.

⁸³ Email correspondence between the Panel and a regional expert on natural resources, October 2017. See also Okech Francis, "Economic chaos fuels gold mining rush in Africa's newest nation", Bloomberg, 5 July 2017. For a map of artisanal mining areas, see also Cortaid, "Mining in South Sudan", January 2016.

⁸⁴ See Cortaid, "Mining in South Sudan", January 2016.

country's gold is likely being sold through Uganda.⁸⁵ However, a lack of transparency and robust oversight in the gold industries of both South Sudan and Uganda prevents proper assessment. As government revenues from oil continue to be severely limited, the importance of gold exploitation and smuggling as a source of revenue to fund ongoing military operations is likely to increase.

V. Elections and the crisis of government legitimacy

50. As the Panel highlighted in its most recent 120-day report (S/2017/789), the Government continues to push the development of a timetable for elections as an objective of the high-level revitalization forum, despite the pervasive insecurity in South Sudan. It views elections as an opportunity to secure legitimacy for itself in the face of the collapse of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, mounting challenges from opposition groups and international condemnation for its continued pursuit of a military solution to the conflict. Among the States members of IGAD, Uganda has been the most forward-leaning in pressing for elections, reinforcing the view of many opposition groups that the country's President's vision for an end to the conflict is to maintain the SPLM-led status quo.⁸⁶

51. If the drive towards elections gathers momentum, the international community, and UNMISS in particular, will face a stark choice between supporting a process that many South Sudanese will view as illegitimate — and one that is likely to lead to the further violent fracture of South Sudan along ethnic lines — or denying support for the process and deepening the antipathy between the Government and the United Nations.

VI. Arms

52. In September 2017, the Panel examined 50 weapons and over 3,000 rounds of ammunition that had been seized by UNMISS from individuals prior to their entry into the protection of civilian sites in the wake of the fighting between government and opposition forces in July 2016. The weapons represent a broad range of manufacturing sources and ages and are consistent with weapons stocks previously observed and documented by arms experts in South Sudan (see annex I).⁸⁷ The Panel is awaiting responses from some of the manufacturers of those weapons to establish how and when they entered the country.

53. In coordination with the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, the Panel is tracing the source of an armoured vehicle captured by opposition forces from the Government during combat operations near Maiwut in July 2017 (S/2017/789, para. 33). The vehicle matches similar armoured vehicles operating in the Sudan that had been

⁸⁵ Although Uganda is not a major gold producer, official statistics from the Bank of Uganda show a nearly tenfold increase in gold exports from 2015 (\$36 million) to 2016 (\$340 million), with much of the gold destined for the United Arab Emirates. In its report of June 2017, entitled *Under-mined: How Corruption, Mismanagement and Political Influence is Undermining Investment in Uganda's Mining Sector and Threatening People and Environment*, Global Witness demonstrates that gold from South Sudan is likely to be transiting through Uganda.

⁸⁶ Interviews with participants in the Uganda SPLM reunification process.

⁸⁷ Panel discussion with international arms experts and a review of arms reports, including Conflict Armament Research, "Dispatch from the field: weapons and ammunition airdropped to SPLA-IO forces in South Sudan — equipment captured by the Sudan People's Liberation Army in Jonglei State in November 2014" (London, 2015). Available from www.conflictarm.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Weapons_and_ammunition_airdropped_to_SPLA-IO_forces_in_South_Sudan.pdf.

traced to a supplier in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, by the Panel of Experts on the Sudan. The Panel has contacted the companies involved in that transaction and is seeking additional information on the procurement of the vehicles.

54. The Panel also received information, including documentary evidence, that a cargo flight containing "31 tons of weapons (including AK-47 rifles, spare magazines, bayonets and related instruments) and ammunition" arrived in Entebbe, Uganda, on 29 August 2017, with Bosasy Logistics listed as the consignee (see annex II). Panel sources claim that these weapons were destined for onward shipment to Juba.⁸⁸ The Panel has received further documentation from the relevant authorities in the country of origin of the weapons, including the end-user certification, serial numbers of the weapons and batch numbers of the ammunition.⁸⁹ This information will aid in monitoring any future transfer of these weapons to South Sudan.

55. The Panel continues to investigate reports of weapons being supplied to opposition groups in South Sudan. Two independent sources have claimed that the Agwelek forces in Upper Nile received arms shipments in September and October 2017. The Panel does not have information that enables it to independently establish the veracity of these reports. Opposition commanders in the field with whom the Panel has spoken continue to claim that they have received no resupply and point to the significant military gains made by government forces in 2017 as support for that claim.⁹⁰ The lack of arms supply has motivated attacks on government outposts, particularly in the Equatorias, as various opposition groups seek to arm themselves from government stockpiles.⁹¹

VII. Conclusion

56. The conflict in South Sudan, soon to enter its fifth year, continues with little sign of restraint by the main belligerents, particularly the Government. The Panel has reviewed reports and conducted interviews with witnesses indicating that the senior leadership of the SPLA and the National Security Service, with the knowledge of the President, is overseeing military operations that are using food as a weapon and also forcibly displacing civilians. Two areas of the country in particular, the western bank of the Nile in Upper Nile State and Bagari County near Wau, have seen civilians targeted as a deliberate tactic. In the case of Bagari, the result has been death by starvation and disease for at least 164 children and older persons.

57. The continued attacks on civilians and military operations throughout the country clearly show that there is still no serious will for peace other than through

⁸⁸ Two high-ranking South Sudanese military sources independently brought the shipment to the attention of the Panel. These sources have provided information on arms shipments that have proved accurate in the past. The roles of Uganda and Bosasy Logistics in previous arms shipments to South Sudan have been documented in previous Panel reports (S/2016/70 and S/2016/963). The August 2017 shipment was subsequently discussed in Bulgarian media articles raising concerns about the oversight of arms shipments. See, for example, "Risky shipment of Bulgarian weapons for Uganda might reach South Sudan: the Government assures that the Bulgarian arms trafficking company and its Russian partners won't lie this time around", 26 August 2017. Available from <https://bivol.bg/en/risky-shipment-of-bulgarian-weapons-for-uganda-might-reach-south-sudan.html>.

⁸⁹ Official correspondence between the Panel and the Government of Bulgaria, October 2017, on file with the Panel.

⁹⁰ This assessment draws on interviews conducted in October 2017 with opposition sources, including senior commanders.

⁹¹ Interviews with opposition commanders, Addis Ababa, September 2017.

the pursuit of military victory. This is most clearly true of the President, the First Vice-President and other members of the Government named herein. Despite regional efforts to address the worsening situation for the majority of South Sudanese, the lack of serious engagement and, in some cases, the outright undermining of peace initiatives is likely to continue until appropriate measures to remove spoilers, including targeted sanctions, are implemented.

VIII. Recommendations

58. The Panel makes the following recommendations:

(a) That, to demonstrate the Security Council's resolve to support an inclusive and sustainable peace in South Sudan, the Committee designate those responsible for the actions and policies that threaten the peace, security and stability of South Sudan, as defined in paragraphs 9 and 10 of resolution 2290 (2016). In addition to the confidential annex presented by the Panel to the Committee in 2016, the Panel has provided evidence in the present report, as well as in its previous reports (S/2016/70, S/2016/793, S/2016/963, S/2017/326 and S/2017/789), regarding multiple individuals responsible for or complicit in the actions and policies described in paragraph 9 of the resolution, including those responsible for the conditions that have resulted in the unprecedented humanitarian crisis, including famine. Statements of case recommending the possible listing of individuals in that category will be submitted for consideration in a supplemental document to the Committee;

(b) That, to demonstrate the Security Council's resolve to support an inclusive and sustainable peace in South Sudan and to prevent the continuing large-scale human rights violations that the Panel has determined are directly related to the supply of arms and ammunition to State and non-State actors, the Council impose an embargo on the supply, sale or transfer of arms and related materiel to South Sudan. The Panel reiterates its recommendations for the modalities for the implementation of such an embargo as outlined in paragraphs 84 (d), (e) and (g) of its interim report for 2015 (S/2015/656). In the Panel's assessment, an arms embargo is technically feasible and would have a positive impact on the political and security environment;

(c) That the Security Council request UNMISS to conduct an investigation and report to the Council on the situations in the greater Bagari area and Upper Nile with a view to establishing whether atrocity crimes may have been committed against civilians in those areas.

Annex I Examination of weapons

In September 2017, the Panel examined 50 weapons held by UNMISS in Juba. This represents a sample of weapons used during the fighting between the government and opposition in July 2016. It is probable that most of these weapons were in the possession of opposition forces given that they were seized from combatants as they fled the fighting in Juba.

The following table summarises the weapons examined by the Panel:

Number	Description
42	AK-pattern variants – 7.62mm
4	Galil assault rifles (2 x model ACE 31, 2 x model ACE 32) – 7.62mm
2	CQ “M16-type” assault rifles – 5.56mm
1	PKM light machine gun – 7.62mm
1	RPG Launcher (no manufacturing marks, likely deliberately removed)

The weapons’ year of manufacture ranged from 1961 to 2013. Fourteen of the weapons had manufacturing marks from factories located in countries of the former Eastern Bloc, while 12 had manufacturing marks from Chinese factories, four from Israeli manufactures, and one Ethiopian-manufactured weapon. The remaining weapons had indistinct or illegible markings. Given the lack of information on provenance, it is not possible to say with certainty when many of these weapons entered South Sudan, however the Panel has been able to establish that the Israeli manufactured weapons were part of a consignment shipped to South Sudan in September 2013.¹ Given the markings on the Israeli weapons, the Internal Security Bureau of the South Sudanese National Security Service appears to have been the consignee. The Panel is attempting to trace other weapons in this sample where data is available.

A sample of the weapons documented is represented in the pictures below:

Figures I & II

Model Type 56-1, produced by State Factory 26 in China in 2013. Weapons with the same manufacturing marks were documented by the NGO Conflict Armament Research near Bentiu, South Sudan in May 2014.²



Figure I

¹ Panel official correspondence with the Government of Israel, 24 October 2017

² Email conversation with Conflict Armament Research, October 2017



Figure II

Figures III & IV

AKM manufactured by Izhevsk Machinebuilding Plant in the USSR in 1961.

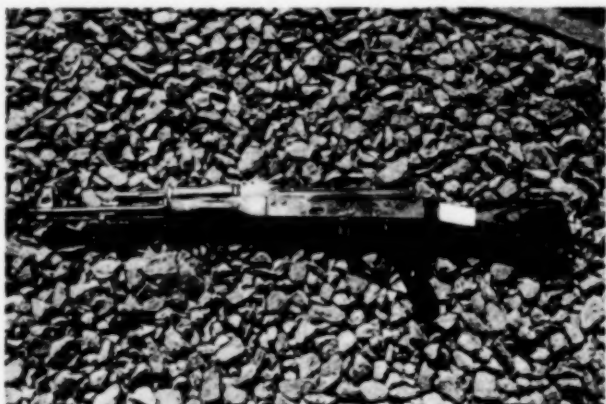


Figure III



Figure IV

Figures V & VI

ACE 31 Assault rifle produced by Israel Weapons Industries (IWI), with marking ISB NSS (Internal Security Bureau of the South Sudan National Security Service).



Figure V

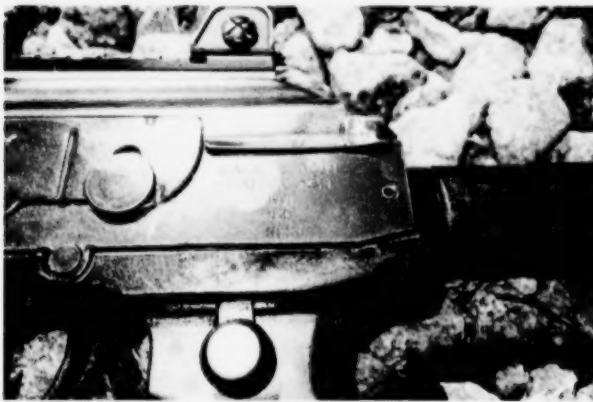


Figure VI

Figures VII & VIII

CQ model assault rifle (5.56mm calibre), manufactured in China, likely in 2013.



Figure VII

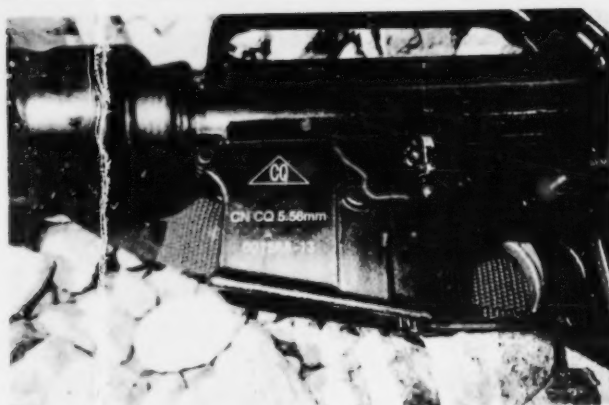


Figure V

Figures X & X
Ethiopia: AK - Pattern GAFAT-1.



Figure X



Figure X

Figures XI & XII

RPG Launcher with manufacturing marks removed

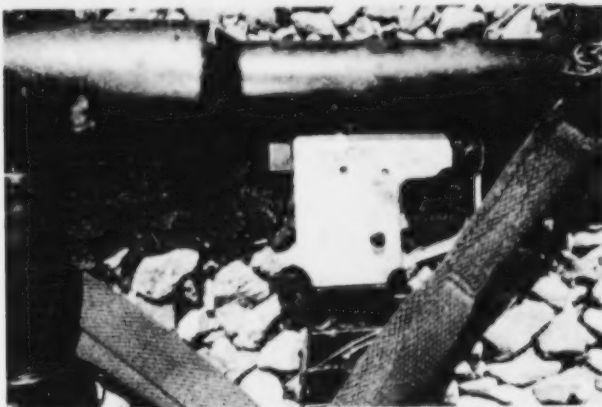


Figure XI

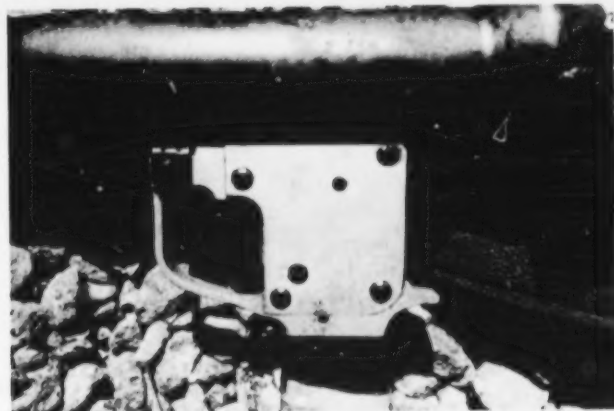


Figure XII

Figures XIII & XIV

Chinese manufactured PKM Light Machine gun.

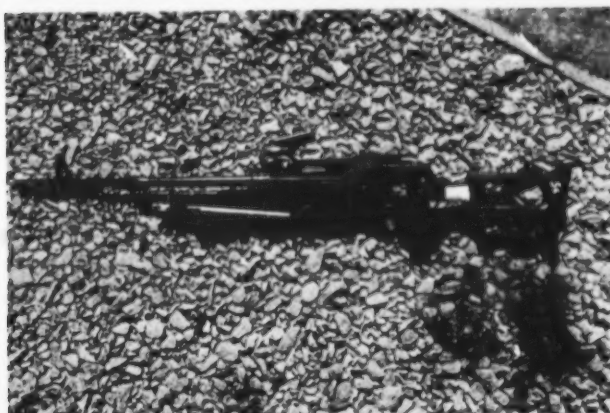


Figure XIII



Figure AII

Ammunition

Figures XV, XVI & XVII

The Panel also examined the more than 3,000 rounds of ammunition also seized by UNMISS in July 2016. However, given the time available and the number of rounds and diversity of the sources of manufacture, it was not possible to document every piece of ammunition. As the rounds are without their packaging, tracing them to their first consignee is impossible. Nevertheless, the examination indicates that none of the ammunition was manufactured after 2015.



Figure XV: Rounds of 7.62mm ammunition seized by UNMISS in July 2016



Figure XVI: Sample of 7.62x39mm ammunition



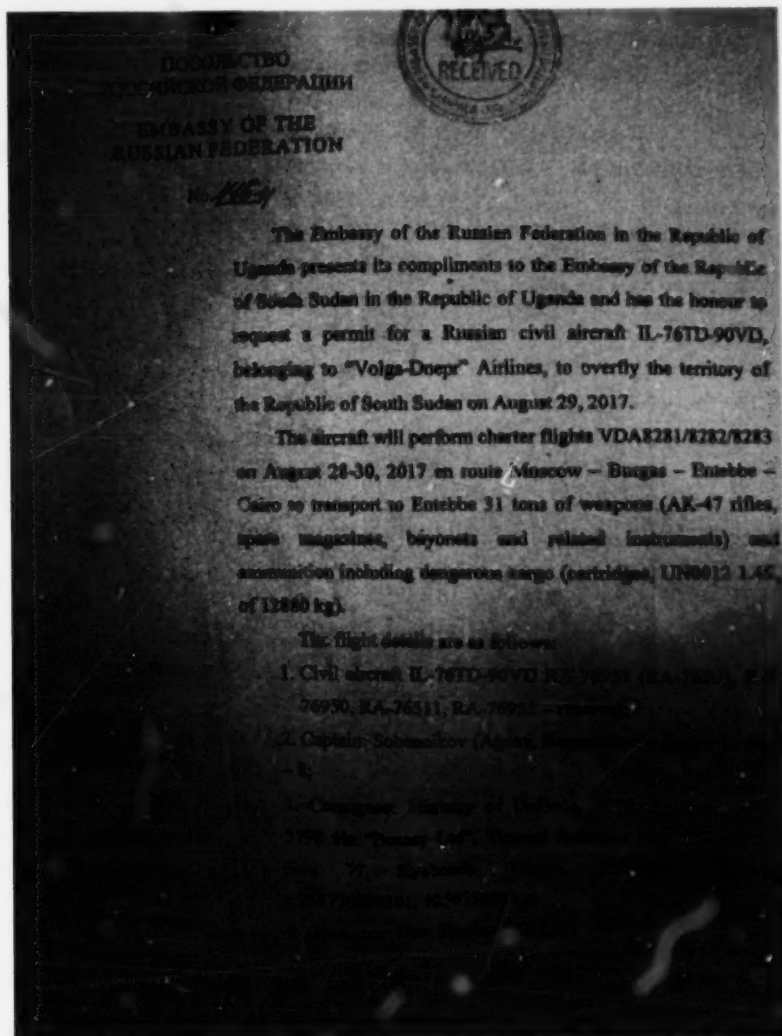
Figure XVII. Sample of 7.62x52Rmm ammunition



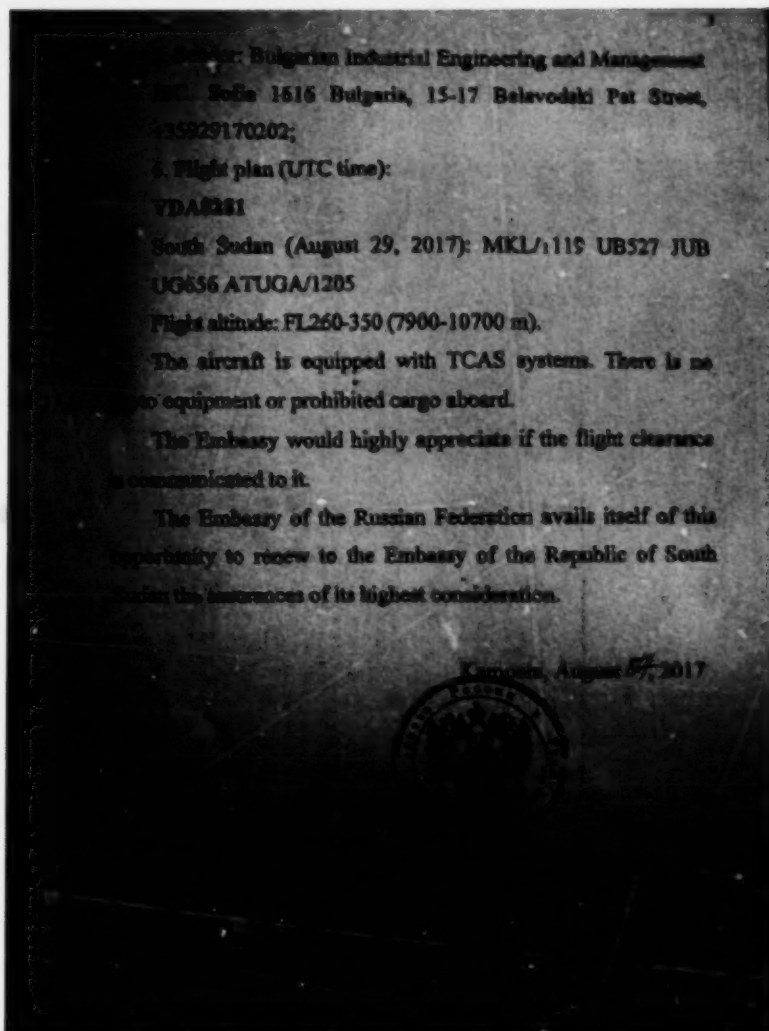
Figure XVIII. Sample of 5.56mm ammunition

Annex II Weapons transport document

The following documents were provided to the Panel by a confidential source on 20 August 2017. The documents subsequently appeared in some media reporting in September 2017.



Weapons transport document, page 1



Weapons transport document, page 2

Annex III Implementation of the asset freeze and travel ban

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2206 (2015), the Panel has continued to gather, examine and analyze information regarding the implementation by Member States of the asset freeze on the six designated individuals. The definition of "assets" covers all funds, other financial assets and economic resources, which are owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by any individuals or entities, that may be designated by the Committee, or by any individuals or entities acting on their behalf or at their direction, or by entities owned or controlled by them.¹

The Panel has obtained evidence indicating that Marial Chanuong Yol Mangok,² one of the six listed individuals, still maintains assets in South Sudan. The Panel's investigation found that Mangok is a shareholder of a business registered in South Sudan. Documents obtained by the Panel on his assets establish the following:

- That on 23 May 2011, Marial Chanuong Yol Mangok was registered as one of the directors of Global Services International Co Ltd.³ His share of the company's capital is 40 per cent. The nominal share capital of the company is USD\$500,000. Marial Chanuong Yol Mangok's share would therefore amount to USD\$200,000.
- That on 6 August 2012, Monywa Marial Chanuong was registered as one of the directors of Planet Holdings Ltd.⁴ During the course of its investigations, the Panel established that Monywa is the son of sanctioned individual Marial Chanuong Yol Mangok⁵, who according to Panel sources, remains the actual beneficiary of 25 per cent of Planet Holdings Ltd.⁶ The nominal share capital of the company is USD\$100,000. Marial Chanuong Yol Mangok's share would therefore amount to USD\$25,000.
- That on 5 November 2008, Gum Marial Chanuong was registered as one of the directors of the Ciec Trading Investment Company.⁷ On 18 March 2013 the presence of Gum Marial Chanuong in the Board of Directors of Ciec Trading Investment Company was confirmed by the Chief Registrar of Companies of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of South Sudan.⁸ During its investigations, the Panel established that Gum Marial Chanuong is the son of listed individual Marial Chanuong Yol Mangok who is the actual beneficiary of 33.3 percent company's shares.
- In connection with the documentation obtained to date, the Panel has submitted an information request to Southern Sudan Associated Advocates to provide information that Marial Chanuong Yol Mangok, Monywa Marial Chanuong and Gum Marial Chanuong are still members of the Board of Directors of the abovementioned companies, but has received no response.⁹

¹ Resolution 2206 (2015), adopted by the Security Council on 3 Mar 2015.

² Marial Chanuong Yol Mangok was promoted to the position of the commander of Ground Forces on 24 May 2017. Eye Radio, "Kur Appoints New Chiefs and Commanders for the Defense Forces," 24 May 2017.

³ Memorandum and the Articles of Association of Global Services International Co Ltd. witnessed by private advocate Dengtiel A Kuur, member of Southern Sudan Associated Advocates from 24/05/2011.

⁴ Memorandum and the Articles of Association of Planet Holdings Ltd. witnessed by private advocate Dengtiel A Kuur, member of Southern Sudan Associated Advocates from 06/08/2012.

⁵ Interview with an SPLA-IO source in August 2017 in Kampala.

⁶ Data obtained from the source in South Sudan opposition in July 2017.

⁷ Memorandum and the Articles of Association of Global Services International Co Ltd. witnessed by private advocate Dengtiel A Kuur, member of Southern Sudan Associated Advocates from 05/11/2008.

⁸ Document from the Chief Registrar of Companies of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of South Sudan from 18/03/2013.

⁹ S/AC.57/2017/PE/OC.50 –PoE request to Southern Sudan Associated Advocates from 22/09/2017.

- The Panel has also submitted six information requests to a number of banks operating in South Sudan to provide information about companies linked to Marial Chanuong Yol Mangok have their settlement account acting.¹⁰
- Investigations are continuing into the sanctioned individuals identified as shareholders of the companies with a view to establishing whether they have other assets in South Sudan.

On 11 May 2017, the Panel received a letter of reply from Kenya Commercial Bank indicating that KCB had "frozen all accounts advised under the United Nations Security Council designations, and will continue to do so." In an article dated 24 October 2017 in *The East African*, it was reported that the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) had issued a circular on 10 October 2017 directing chief executives of Kenyan banks to give "a detailed report on accounts operated by the six generals as well as on assets they own or control directly or indirectly through other persons", and to report to the CBK by 5 November 2017.¹¹ This action was taken following a 6 September 2017 "Advisory to Financial Institutions on Political Corruption Risks in South Sudan" by the United States Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) that certain South Sudanese senior political figures may seek to abuse the financial system.¹²

¹⁰ On 2 October 2017, requests for information were sent by the Panel to the Buffalo Commercial Bank, Alpha Commercial Bank, Equity Bank, International Commercial Bank, Ivory Bank, and Cooperative Bank of South Sudan.

¹¹ <http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/oped/comment/Sanctions-against-South-Sudan-should-worry-Kenyan-banks/434750-4116278-gtctebz/index.html>.

¹² <https://www.fincen.gov/resources/advisories/fincen-advisory-fin-2017-a004>.

Annex IV Macroeconomic conditions

With world oil prices holding steady between USD 50/60 per barrel, and limited prospects for a significant increase in production, oil—which still accounts a significant proportion of the government's revenue—is not a viable near term financial lifeline.¹ The oil revenues for South Sudan are also limited by the continuing in-kind payments to Sudan in accordance with the September 2012 Agreement on Oil and Related Economic Matters (Agreement on Oil) signed by the two countries, which stipulated that South Sudan would pay Sudan USD 3.028 billion for oil transit fees over 4 years. The transit fees to Sudan constitute USD 25.01 per barrel² of oil extracted from South Sudan. The current problem with the Agreement on Oil is that the South Sudan payment schedule was dependent on oil production levels, which declined significantly during the conflict, as well as the fact that the possible influence of global price fluctuations on South Sudan's financial credibility was not reflected.³ Furthermore, the current absence of an influx of foreign capital in the oil industry is conditioned by the pervasive insecurity in oil-producing areas.⁴

At the end of June 2017, the total volume of funds borrowed externally by the government of South Sudan was estimated at USD 974 million. However, this figure could be approximate due to the difficulties of getting to certain statistics. The absence of new creditors confirms that in the last two years the South Sudanese authorities have been almost unable to borrow externally. Only short-term advances from foreign oil traders (these amounts refer mainly to the Dutch commodity trading company Trafigura) showed an increase from the past year to June 2017 (from USD 229 million to USD 289 million).

Qatar National Bank (QNB) is a significant creditor of South Sudan, providing letters of credit totalling around USD 650 million. The borrowing from QNB ended following a sharp decline in oil revenues and the Central Bank of South Sudan's (CBSS) inability to follow the payment schedule. Consequently, in October 2015, QNB suspended the credit line. The existing credit facility was rescheduled in February 2016. The terms of the new schedule require South Sudan to pay QNB USD 10 million per month at one month Libor plus six percent margin. Later, the size of monthly instalments from CBSS to QNB was agreed to be reduced to US\$5 million.⁵

¹ Xinhuanet, "South Sudan parliament passes budget for next fiscal year," 29 August 2017.

² Agreement between the Government of the Republic of South Sudan and the Government of the Republic of Sudan on Oil and Related Economic Matters, Addis Ababa, 27 Sept 2012.

Also confirmed while meeting the government of South Sudan on 12 September 2017.

³ Interview with former worker at the Ministry of Petroleum in September 2017.

⁴ Xinhuanet, "South Sudan army downplays rebel's threat to stop oil production," 5 September 2017.

⁵ Correspondence with International Monetary Fund dated 21 Jun. 2017; Letter from Qatar National Bank dated 3 October 2017, in reply to the Panel's letter of 14 August, 2017.



Security Council

Distr.: General
21 November 2017

Original: English

Letter dated 20 November 2017 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a communication, dated 15 November 2017, which I received from the Director General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), transmitting a summary update of the activities carried out by the OPCW fact-finding mission in the Syrian Arab Republic in 2017 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you could bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) António Guterres



Annex

[Original: Arabic, Chinese, English,
French, Russian and Spanish]

I have the honour to transmit herewith the note by the Technical Secretariat of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons entitled "Summary update of the activities carried out by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons fact-finding mission in the Syrian Arab Republic in 2017" (see enclosure).

(Signed) Ahmet Üzümcü

Enclosure

[Original: Arabic, Chinese, English,
French, Russian and Spanish]

Note by the Technical Secretariat

Summary update of the activities carried out by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons fact-finding mission in the Syrian Arab Republic in 2017

INTRODUCTION

1. In accordance with Executive Council (hereinafter "the Council") decisions EC-M-48/DEC.1 (dated 4 February 2015) and EC-M-50/DEC.1 (dated 23 November 2015), as well as with United Nations Security Council resolution 2209 (2015), the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) has continued to study all available information relating to allegations of use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, including that provided by the Syrian Arab Republic as well as by others.
2. This summary provides an update on the FFM's activities in 2017 in accordance with the aforementioned Council decisions, as well as United Nations Security Council resolution 2209 (2015).

METHODOLOGY RELATED TO THE COLLECTION AND EVALUATION OF INFORMATION

3. As recommended by the Council, the FFM has collected and studied all available information related to allegations of the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic. This includes information provided by States Parties including notes verbales from the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as other sources.
4. For each allegation of use, the Information Cell of the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter "the Secretariat") conducts an initial evaluation of the incident based on available information. Subsequently, the FFM conducts a more detailed evaluation, based on all available information. Each incident is then categorised using the following criteria:
 - (a) High: There is significant information consistent with the use of chemicals as weapons.
 - (b) Medium: There is some information lending credence to the possibility of the use of chemicals, but it is currently insufficient to make a confident assessment of consistency with the use of chemicals as weapons.
 - (c) Low: There is no or little available information, or the information available suggests a low likelihood of the use of chemicals as weapons.
5. Initial assessments may alter over time as more information becomes available.
6. The FFM applies a number of methods of evaluation, including, but not limited to:
 - (a) research into the incidents and existing reports;
 - (b) assessment and corroboration of background information;
 - (c) meetings or interviews with potential witnesses, either in person or using remote technology;

(d) review of documentation and records provided by interviewees;

(e) review of photographs, video, and audio material; and

(f) assessment of the symptoms of casualties, as reported by interviewees.

7. In order to gather facts regarding incidents of alleged use of chemicals as weapons, the FFM has deployed several times throughout the year in order to conduct interviews and collect additional evidence, including samples.

8. Further investigation may be carried out for allegations categorised as medium or high.

FACT-FINDING ACTIVITIES AND OVERVIEW OF INFORMATION REVIEWED

Notes verbales from the Syrian Arab Republic

9. The Secretariat has received 119 notes verbales from the Syrian Arab Republic (classified as "Protected") between 5 January 2016 and 7 November 2017, which contain information that is potentially relevant to the use of chemicals as weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic. These are listed in Annex 1.

10. Six of these notes verbales requested the FFM to investigate specific incidents of the possible use of chemicals as weapons. The remaining 113 notes verbales conveyed information relating to alleged perpetrators, including potential supply routes and storage locations. Nine of these 113 notes verbales also referenced allegations of the use of chemicals as weapons. The FFM has requested the Syrian Arab Republic to provide additional supporting information, such as intelligence reports or documentation, to substantiate this information and to facilitate the assessment process.

11. The Secretariat received Notes Verbales 109, dated 17 November 2016; 113, dated 29 November 2016; and 103, dated 26 October 2017, which requested action by the FFM.

12. Note Verbale 109 contained correspondence 259, dated 16 November 2016, referring to a number of incidents reported to have occurred on the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic. These incidents are reported to have occurred in Al Nayrab, eastern Aleppo on 13 November 2016, in Manian in the west of Aleppo on 3 November 2016, and in the Hamadaniyeh and Dhahiyet Al-Assad neighbourhoods of Aleppo on 31 October 2016.

13. Note Verbale 113 contained correspondence 9551, dated 29 November 2016, which referred to an incident in Aleppo reported to have occurred in Um-Housh, a suburb of Aleppo, on 16 September 2016.

14. Note Verbale 103 requested the OPCW to investigate an incident that occurred in Kharbit Masasneh, Hama Governorate.

15. The Secretariat received Note Verbale 83 (dated 28 August 2017) from the Syrian Arab Republic in reference to the Secretariat's Notes Verbales NV/INS/OPB/208241/17 (dated 2 February 2017) and NV/INS/208801/17 (dated 3 March 2017), which provided additional information that was requested by the FFM regarding the alleged incidents which took place in the towns of Al Sukkari, Zebdiyeh, Sakhour and Kafr Zita. The documents provided by the Syrian Arab Republic also included information about two toxic chemical storage facilities in the Sanaa Mhaydle School in Hanano and in Sukkari, both located in Aleppo.

16. The Secretariat received Note Verbale 88, dated 20 September 2017, from the Syrian Arab Republic which provided information regarding an alleged incident that occurred in the countryside of Al-Salamiyah, Hama Governorate on 9 August 2017.

17. The Secretariat received Note Verbale 106, dated 1 November 2017, that reported an alleged incident in Yarmouk camp.

Other sources

18. From 1 December 2015 to 20 November 2016, the Information Cell recorded 121 potential incidents of the use of chemical weapons reported in open sources. These are listed in Annex 2.

19. The FFM has actively pursued further information, including information provided by States Parties, the United Nations (including the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) in Damascus), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and potential witnesses, as well as in-depth research on the Internet.

Deployment activities

20. As noted above, the FFM has deployed on several occasions in order to gather relevant facts. All deployments and movement of the FFM took place with all necessary authorisations, including authorisation from the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS).

21. The FFM deployed several times, both to Damascus and to other locations, with regards to alleged incidents.

22. During deployments to Damascus, in addition to other activities, the FFM attended a number of meetings with the Syrian National Authority in relation to the aforementioned notes verbales, and were provided with:

- (a) access to conduct interviews and to review and copy medical records and other relevant materials that were provided by both the authorities of the Syrian Arab Republic and of the Russian Federation; and
- (b) access to the Syrian Scientific Studies and Research Centre (SSRC) in order to conduct physical examinations and technical exploitation of items, that included unexploded munitions, and to secure splits of environmental samples related to the reported incidents in the districts of Aleppo that were provided by both the authorities of the Syrian Arab Republic and of the Russian Federation.

Western outskirts of Aleppo City

23. Several incidents were reported in open sources, alleging the use of chlorine in the area to the west and southwest of Aleppo city, in late October and early November 2016. These are listed in Annex 2.

24. Several of these allegations were also referenced in Note Verbale 109. With respect to these incidents:

- (a) The team conducted interviews and reviewed medical records as well as other information provided by the authorities of the Syrian Arab Republic and the Russian Federation.
- (b) In December, the FFM was able to conduct physical examinations and technical exploitation of items, including unexploded munitions and fragments, and secure splits of environmental samples in the SSRC related to the reported incident in the 1070/3000 districts of Aleppo; all of which were collected by the authorities of the Syrian Arab Republic.
- (c) In January, the team recovered environmental samples related to the incidents that had been secured in the SSRC, which were then transported to the OPCW Laboratory for further analysis.

Eastern and southern Aleppo

25. Several alleged incidents were reported in open sources, alleging the use of chlorine, in the area to the east and south of Aleppo city, from May to late December 2016. These are listed in Annex 2. Additionally, Note Verbale 109 referred to an alleged incident in Al Nayrab on 13 November 2016 and Note Verbale 83 referred to alleged incidents in Sukkari, Zebdiyah and Sakhour.

26. The FFM carried out both face-to-face interviews and Skype interviews, covering several of the open-source allegations and some of the allegations that had not previously been found in open sources.

27. The FFM has received documentary evidence from the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic; however, no physical evidence has been received from the sites of the alleged incidents.

Saraqib

28. An allegation of the use of chlorine in the vicinity of Saraqib was reported in open sources.

29. The FFM carried out both face-to-face and Skype interviews in reference to an open-source allegation of an incident on 1 August 2016.

30. The FFM has not received any physical evidence from the site of the alleged incident.

Kafr Zita

31. An allegation of the use of chlorine in the vicinity of Kafr Zita was reported in open sources. This allegation was also referenced in Note Verbale 83 from the Syrian Arab Republic.

32. The FFM carried out both face-to-face and Skype interviews in reference to an open-source allegation of an incident on 1 October 2016.

33. The FFM has not received any physical evidence from the site of the alleged incident.

South Idlib and north Hama

34. The incident of 30 March 2017 in Ltamenah has been reported in Secretariat Note S/1548/2017, dated 2 November 2017. The conclusions are summarised in the following paragraphs.

35. The FFM has not been able to determine with absolute certainty the use of a chemical weapon. Nevertheless, sufficient facts were collected to allow the FFM to determine the presence of sarin on samples which came from the alleged site of the incident; that casualties from that site and time period displayed symptoms and received treatment consistent with exposure to sarin; and that munition parts from the alleged site of the incident were consistent with application in a chemical weapon.

36. Therefore, the FFM is able to conclude that sarin was more than likely used as a chemical weapon on 30 March 2017 in the south of Ltamenah.

37. The FFM carried out interviews in relation to alleged incidents towards the end of March and early April 2017. Throughout the interviews, including those relating to Khan Shaykhun, additional allegations were raised by the interviewees.

38. Allegations covered in the interviews include the following incidents: 24 March 2017 in Ltamenah, Khattab and Qomhane, 25 March 2017 in Ltamenah, and 3 April 2017 in Hobait and Al-Tamanah. Open sources report the use of chlorine and sarin.

39. The FFM has received physical evidence from the sites of two allegations.

South central Hama

40. Note Verbale 88 refers to an allegation of use of an unknown toxic gas in Al-Salimayah on 9 August 2017. The FFM also notes other allegations in open sources in the area of south central Hama.

41. While the FFM has requested further information from the Syrian Arab Republic, it has so far not received any physical evidence related to the sites of alleged incidents nor carried out any interviews.

Areas in Damascus and its immediate surroundings

42. The FFM has noted regular alleged incidents in areas around Damascus, such as Ein Tarma and Jobar, that have been difficult to access. These allegations reference both chlorine and sarin. The FFM has held both face-to-face and Skype interviews with regards to allegations in these areas.

43. With regards to the allegation in Yarmouk Camp (Note Verbale 106), the FFM is reviewing open source information, with a view to providing a response to the Syrian Arab Republic.

44. No physical evidence has been received from the sites of any allegations.

NEXT STEPS

45. Taking all of the gathered information into account, the FFM is still in the process of collecting and analysing all available information in regards to the incidents reported in Note Verbale 109. However, since the security situation inside the Syrian Arab Republic may have changed, additional information could now be available.

46. The FFM is currently in the process of analysing the information provided by the authorities of the Syrian Arab Republic as well as other sources in relation to incidents mentioned in Note Verbale 83. In regards to Notes Verbales 83, 88 and 103, the Secretariat has requested more information from the Syrian Arab Republic with a view to providing a response.

47. The next phase of the FFM's work will concentrate on building upon its analysis of available evidence through the continued collection and evaluation of relevant information and evidence through all means available.

48. The FFM will provide more detailed reports in due course, including information on all relevant evidence and its collection.

Annexes (English only)

Annex 1: Notes Verbales Received from the Syrian Arab Republic in 2016 and 2017 (up to 7 November 2017) with Potential Relevance to the Alleged Supply, Storage and Use of Chemicals as Weapons

Annex 2: Open-Source Allegations of the Use of Chemicals as Weapons from 1 December 2015 to 7 November 2017

Annex 1

**NOTES VERBALES RECEIVED FROM THE SYRIAN ARAB
REPUBLIC IN 2016 AND 2017 (UP TO 7 NOVEMBER 2017)
WITH POTENTIAL RELEVANCE TO THE ALLEGED SUPPLY,
STORAGE AND USE OF CHEMICALS AS WEAPONS**

	Date of Note Verbale	No.	Transmission of Information (TI) or Request for Action (RA)	Summary
1.	5 January 2016	4	TI	Supply of toxic chemicals
2.	15 January 2016	8	TI	Supply of toxic chemical
3.	1 February 2016	12	TI	Targeting of areas with chemicals in an attempt to mislead
4.	2 February 2016	13	TI	Supply of chemicals
5.	5 February 2016	16	TI	Acquisition and development of missiles
6.	5 February 2016	17	TI	Smuggling of chemicals
7.	8 February 2016	19	TI	Reference to a chemical attack at an airport on 2 February 2016
8.	8 February 2016	20	TI	Reference to a chemical attack on 19 March 2013
9.	15 February 2016	22	TI	Supply of toxic gas and intention to use
10.	30 March 2016	34	TI	Supply of chemicals and storage location
11.	19 April 2016	39	TI	Information regarding attack (Tanaf)
12.	4 May 2016	40	TI	Supply of chemicals and storage location
13.	6 May 2016	42	TI	Supply of chemicals and distribution of masks
14.	11 May 2016	43	TI	Transport and storage of toxic chemicals
15.	6 June 2016	48	TI	Smuggling of chemicals from neighbouring country
16.	17 June 2016	54	TI	Chemical attack on 13 June 2016
17.	7 July 2016	58	TI	Request for answers from a neighbouring country
18.	11 July 2016	59	TI	Storage locations
19.	11 July 2016	60	TI	Targeting of Sheikh Maqsoud 8 March and 7 April 2016
20.	12 July 2016	62	TI	Activities in the area of Sheikh Bahr in Idlib
21.	14 July 2016	64	TI	Activity related to toxic chemicals
22.	16 August 2016	69	RA	Attaches letter 122 which contains information on Al-Awamid and requests investigation by FFM
23.	17 August 2016	70	TI	Filling of chemical weapons
24.	26 September 2016	76	TI	Storage of nitrate and napalm
25.	29 September 2016	77	TI	Intention to use toxic chemicals

	Date of Note Verbale	No.	Transmission of Information (TI) or Request for Action (RA)	Summary
26.	3 October 2016	78	TI	Coordination of use of chemical weapons
27.	5 October 2016	79	TI	Information on attack on Um-Housh
28.	5 October 2016	80	TI	Intention to use and storage location
29.	10 October 2016	82	TI	Storage of toxic chemicals and their potential use
30.	10 October 2016	83	TI	Theft and moving of toxic chemicals
31.	10 October 2016	84	TI	Smuggling and transport of toxic chemicals
32.	18 October 2016	88	TI	Stockpiling of toxic chemicals
33.	19 October 2016	89	TI	Location of chemical weapons supplied from neighbouring country
34.	1 November 2016	90	TI	Supply of chemical weapons to terrorists by neighbouring country
35.	1 November 2016	92	TI	Intention of transportation of toxic chemicals by terrorists
36.	1 November 2016	93	TI	Possession and location of chemical weapons by terrorists
37.	1 November 2016	94	TI	Intention of terrorist organisation to attack civilians and fabricate evidence
38.	1 November 2016	95	TI	Transport of chemical weapons from neighbouring country
39.	2 November 2016	96	TI	Document classification
40.	4 November 2016	97	TI	Export of chemical weapons
41.	4 November 2016	98	TI	Preparation of chemical weapons by terrorist organisation
42.	10 November 2016	101	TI	Preparation for targeting of military forces and civilians with toxic chemicals
43.	14 November 2016	105	TI	Attack on 3 November
44.	16 November 2016	106	TI	Including CD, claims fabricated footage and explains why invalid with respect to chemical weapons. Reiterate No. 60 with regards to Sheikh Maqsoud
45.	16 November 2016	108	TI	Storage of toxic chemicals and planned attacks
46.	17 November 2016	109	RA	Attaches letter 259 which references 3 toxic attacks and requests investigation by the OPCW
47.	28 November 2016	112	TI	Letter with information about experts illegal entry to the Syrian Arab Republic
48.	29 November 2016	113	RA	Letter regarding samples from incidents
49.	30 November 2016	115	TI	Intelligence regarding locations of factories to make gas cylinders
50.	14 December 2016	119	TI	Intelligence regarding purchase of toxic chemicals

	Date of Note Verbale	No.	Transmission of Information (TI) or Request for Action (RA)	Summary
51.	19 December 2016	121	TI	intelligence regarding faked alleged use videos
52.	19 December 2016	122	TI	Intelligence regarding a State Party moving chemicals into the Syrian Arab Republic
53.	27 December 2016	123	TI	Intelligence regarding terrorists with chemical moving to a location in the east of the Syrian Arab Republic
54.	9 January 2017	1	TI	Response to L/ODG/207835/17 regarding sample transportation
55.	1 February 2017	4	TI	Information regarding companies from a State Party selling large quantities of a chemical
56.	7 February 2017	5	TI	Letter regarding staff that may not participate in verification activities
57.	20 February 2017	10	TI	Letter regarding an invite for FFM visit
58.	20 February 2017	9	TI	Letter denying allegations made in the Human rights watch paper
59.	27 February 2017	13	TI	Information regarding materials found in Aleppo area
60.	7 March 2017	15	TI	Letter No. 15, further info on witness number relating to EDMS 74699, letter No. 10
61.	7 March 2017	14	TI	Follow-up to Note No 4, EDMS 74433
62.	21 March 2017	18	TI	Information regarding chemical weapons to be used in Damascus and Aleppo
63.	10 April 2017	23	TI	Information regarding movement of cars loaded with toxic materials
64.	11 April 2017	25	TI	Open letter posted to the external server
65.	18 April 2017	26	TI	Covering letter with attached CD showing footage of alleged use
66.	18 April 2017	27	TI	Letter detailing chemical and associated munition material found in Aleppo, with analysis report
67.	19 April 2017	29	TI	Letter with reference to potential chemical attacks targeting Damascus
68.	25 April 2017	30	TI	Letter regarding boxes of chlorine found in the Syrian Arab Republic, Damascus area
69.	26 April 2017	31	TI	Ref Note 27, (EDMS 75474) including CDs with extra info
70.	28 April 2017	32	TI	Information regarding numerous chemical activities
71.	3 May 2017	36	TI	Letter regarding planned attack in Idlib
72.	3 May 2017	37	TI	Letter regarding 3 chemical rockets

	Date of Note Verbale	No.	Transmission of Information (TI) or Request for Action (RA)	Summary
73.	3 May 2017	38	TI	Letter regarding an explosion following an airstrike in eastern Deir al-Zour
74.	4 May 2017	39	TI	Information regarding the transportation and storage of chemicals
75.	8 May 2017	48	TI	Information regarding the movement of chemicals and filling of gas cylinders, and information
76.	8 May 2017	42	TI	Information regarding potential staged chemical weapons incident
77.	8 May 2017	40	TI	Letter with ref SY0458, and Shayrat attachment letter No. 113
78.	12 May 2017	46	TI	Response accepting FFM team to visit incident.
79.	16 May 2017	48	TI	Information regarding the movement of chemicals
80.	22 May 2017	52	TI	Information regarding the movement of chemicals
81.	29 May 2017	53	TI	Information regarding foreign nationals linked to incidents
82.	1 June 2017	54	TI	Letter accepting the FFM
83.	1 June 2017	55	TI	Request for portions of samples referred to in S/1497/2017 report
84.	14 June 2017	58	TI	Information regarding plan to attack town
85.	21 June 2017	62	TI	Letter regarding the transfer of toxic chemicals
86.	22 June 2017	61	TI	Information regarding the execution of an informant
87.	3 July 2017	68	TI	Information regarding foreign nationals moving sarin into northern Syrian Arab Republic
88.	4 July 2017	64	TI	Information regarding a chemical weapons rocket which may enter the Syrian Arab Republic
89.	4 July 2017	63	TI	Detailed information regarding planned chemical attacks
90.	4 July 2017	60	TI	Information regarding chemicals being moved into the Syrian Arab Republic
91.	10 July 2017	70	TI	Reference to note No. 63 regarding planned chemical weapons attacks
92.	11 July 2017	71	TI	Information regarding a planned attack
93.	14 July 2017	73	TI	Updated information regarding the movement of chemical weapons (Note No. 68)
94.	17 July 2017	74	TI	Request for samples (ref Note No. 55)

	Date of Note Verbale	No.	Transmission of Information (TI) or Request for Action (RA)	Summary
95.	19 July 2017	76	TI	Updated - Intelligence regarding transfer of chemicals
96.	26 July 2017	77	TI	Information regarding movement of chemicals
97.	9 August 2017	78	TI	Information regarding movement of chemicals
98.	15 August 2017	81	TI	Request for samples
99.	15 August 2017	80	TI	Information regarding movement of chemicals
100.	28 August 2017	78	TI	Registered as documentary evidence
101.	20 September 2017	88	RA	Alleged chemical attack
102.	29 September 2017	91	TI	Information regarding supply of chemical weapons
103.	29 September 2017	90	TI	Information regarding supply of chemical weapons
104.	29 September 2017	89	TI	Information regarding supply of chemical weapons
105.	6 October 2017	95	TI	Detailed response regarding Secretariat response to request for sample splits, with letter 234 dated 5 October 2017
106.	6 October 2017	96	TI	Reference to Kafr Zita
107.	12 October 2017	99	TI	Information regarding supply and storage of chemical weapons
108.	13 October 2017	100	TI	Information regarding locations of planned chemical attacks
109.	19 October 2017	101	TI	Audio file
110.	26 October 2017	105	TI	Movement of toxic chemicals
111.	26 October 2017	103	RA	Request for investigation into alleged use Hama area
112.	26 October 2017	104	TI	Correspondence regarding interviews planned with a news channel
113.	1 November 2017	107	TI	Information regarding toxic chemicals being loaded into explosive devices, Damascus area
114.	1 November 2017	106	TI	Information regarding an alleged use in Damascus area
115.	3 November 2017	108	TI	Note requesting samples splits
116.	6 November 2017	110	TI	Request for report on DF samples
117.	6 November 2017	109	TI	Request for team to visit a location to look at chlorine canisters
118.	7 November 2017	113	TI	Detailed information regarding a potential planned chemical weapons attack
119.	7 November 2017	112	TI	Information regarding a potential planned chemical weapons attack

Annex 2

**OPEN-SOURCE ALLEGATIONS OF THE USE OF CHEMICALS
AS WEAPONS 1 DECEMBER 2015 TO 7 NOVEMBER 2017**

	Date	Approximate Location	Governorate
	2015		
1.	20 December	Teir Maalah	Homs
2.	22 December	Moadamiyah	Rif Damashq
3.	27 December	Jobar	Damascus
	2016		
4.	23 January	al-Nashabiyah	Rif Damashq
5.	27 January	Ghouta	Rif Damashq
6.	31 January	Moadamiyah	Rif Damashq
7.	8 March	Sheikh Maksoud	Aleppo
8.	13 March	Sheikh Maksoud	Aleppo
9.	3 April	Qaboun	Rif Damashq
10.	4 April	Deir Ez-zor airbase	Deir Ez-zor
11.	7 April	Sheikh Maksoud	Aleppo
12.	9 April	AlTanf	Homs
13.	11 April	Al Mayadeen	Deir Ez-zor
14.	11 April (may be same as 9 April)	AlTanf	Homs
15.	12 April	Sheikh Maksoud	Aleppo
16.	14 April	Handarat	Aleppo
17.	16 April	Al Grindat	Aleppo
18.	16 April	Mt Dakwah	Rif Damashq
19.	18 April	Al-Eis	Aleppo
20.	18 April	Al-Amqiyah Village	Hama
21.	24 April	Jisr al Shughur	Idlib
22.	26 April	Taqa village, near Shaddadi, ~60 km south of Hasakah city	Al Hasakah
23.	1 May	Al-Aqaba, Aleppo City	Aleppo
24.	2 May	North Aleppo	Aleppo
25.	22 May	Jobar	Damascus
26.	17 May	Sheikh Maksoud	Aleppo
27.	30 May	Al-Waar	Homs
28.	End May 2016	Karm al Qaterji	Aleppo
29.	13 June	Hawsh al Farah	Rif Damashq
30.	15 June	E Ghouta	Rif Damashq
31.	22 June	Near Tabqa (to the south) in western Raqqa	Raqqa
32.	23 June	Haritan	Aleppo
33.	26 June	East Ghouta	Rif Damashq
34.	29 June	Jobar	Damascus
35.	29 June	Al-Mallah	Aleppo
36.	3 July	Karm Al-Myassar	Aleppo

	Date	Approximate Location	Governorate
37.	20 July	Kafr Hamrah	Aleppo
38.	23 July	Various, Aleppo City	Aleppo
39.	1 August	Saraqib	Idlib
40.	2 August	Old City in Aleppo	Aleppo
41.	2 August	Kafr Takarem	Idlib
42.	4 August	Mashhad	Aleppo
43.	No date given	Al-Aqaba	Aleppo
44.	7 August	Ramouseh	Aleppo
45.	8 August	Khan Al-asal	Aleppo
46.	10 August	Zebdiyeh, Aleppo	Aleppo
47.	12 August	Hraytan	Aleppo
48.	16 August	Marea	Aleppo
49.	16 August	Aleppo city	Aleppo
50.	20 August	Hasakah city	Hasakah
51.	25 August	Dandaniyah, near Manbij	Aleppo
52.	28 August	Qabr al Englizi/ Qabr al Inglizi	Aleppo
53.	5 September	Marea	Aleppo
54.	6 September	Al Sukari	Aleppo
55.	6 September	Tarma/Ghouta	Damascus
56.	16 September	Um-Housh	Aleppo
57.	28 September	Karah	Hama
58.	1 October	Locale of Kafr Zita	Hama
59.	3 October	Kafarya and Al Fu'ah villages	Idlib
60.	6 October	Um-Housh	Aleppo
61.	17 October	Ltamenah	Hama
62.	30 October	3000 apartments project, Hamadaniyah, Al-Assad, 1070 apartments project	Aleppo
63.	31 October	Rashidin	Aleppo
64.	2 November	Khan Al Assal and Kafr Naha	Aleppo
65.	3 November	New Aleppo Region	Aleppo
66.	7 November	Khan Al Assal	Aleppo
67.	13 November	Nayrab (near airport)	Aleppo
68.	18 November	Hanano	Aleppo
69.	18/19 November	Ard Al Hamra / Al Sakhour	Aleppo
70.	20 November	Al-Sakhour	Aleppo
71.	20 November	Tariq al Bab	Aleppo
72.	21 November	Jisr Al Haj	Aleppo
73.	22 November	Qaterji district (and Dahret Awwad)	Aleppo
74.	23 November	Ard Al Hamra	Aleppo
75.	24 November	Ard Al Hamra	Aleppo
76.	26 November	Al Khaliliya	Aleppo
77.	26 November	Qabasin	Aleppo
78.	26 November	Al Bab	Aleppo
79.	28 November	Sheikh Maksoud	Aleppo
80.	28 November	Qadi Askar	Aleppo

	Date	Approximate Location	Governorate
81.	8 December	Al Klasa	Aleppo
82.	8 December	Al Maghayer	Aleppo
83.	8 December	Firdous	Aleppo
84.	9 December	Kallaseh	Aleppo
85.	9 December	Al Qasiliah	Aleppo
86.	11 December	Uqayribat	Homs (Salamiyah)
87.	26 December	Wadi Barada	Rif Damashq
2017			
88.	3 January	Wadi Barada	Rif Damashq
89.	5 January	Basima village	Rif Damashq
90.	8 January	Wadi Barada	Rif Damashq
91.	30 January	Al Marj	Rif Damashq
92.	7 February	Irbīn	Rif Damashq
93.	9 February	Irbīn	Rif Damashq
94.	10 February	Irbīn	Rif Damashq
95.	21 February	Hosh ad-Dawahra	Rif Damashq
96.	26 February	Harasta	Rif Damashq
97.	3 March	Habit	Idlib
98.	23 March	Maarrat al-Nu'man	Idlib
99.	25 March	Ltamenah	Hama
100.	29 March	Qaboun	Damascus
101.	30 March	Ltamenah	Hama
102.	4 April	Khan Shaykhun	Idlib
103.	7 April	Harasta	Damascus
104.	22 April	Zamalka and Irbīn	Damascus
105.	29 April	Ltamenah	Hama
106.	22 June	Jobar	Damascus
107.	1 July	Ayn Tarma and Zamalka	Damascus
108.	6 July	Ayn Tarma/Jobar	Damascus
109.	7 July	Location information is unavailable	
110.	14 July	Ayn Tarma	Damascus
111.	20 July	Ayn Tarma	Damascus
112.	4 August	Kharbit Masasnah	Hama
113.	9 August	Al Salamiyah	Hama
114.	16 August	Ayn Tarma/Jobar	Damascus
115.	27 August	Ayn Tarma/Jobar	Damascus
116.	29 August	Ghanim al Ali	Al Raqqah
117.	10 September	Badia	Rif Damashq
118.	7 October	Al Musheirfeh	Hama
119.	22 October	Yarmouk	Damascus
120.	7 November	Maqarrayn	Hama
121.	8 November	Harasta	Damascus



Security Council

Distr.: General
21 November 2017

Original: English

Report of the Secretary-General concerning the credentials of the alternate representatives of Uruguay on the Security Council

Pursuant to rule 15 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the Secretary-General wishes to report that he has received a letter dated 21 November 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Uruguay to the United Nations stating that Mr. Jorge Haboosh and Ms. Maria Fernanda Silvera have been appointed alternate representatives of Uruguay on the Security Council.

In the opinion of the Secretary-General, that letter constitutes adequate provisional credentials.





Security Council

Distr.: General
16 November 2017

Original: English

**Implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014),
2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015) and 2332 (2016)****Report of the Secretary-General****I. Introduction**

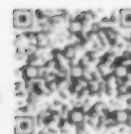
1. The present report is the forty-fifth submitted pursuant to paragraph 17 of Security Council resolution 2139 (2014), paragraph 10 of resolution 2165 (2014), paragraph 5 of resolution 2191 (2014), paragraph 5 of resolution 2258 (2015) and paragraph 5 of resolution 2332 (2016), in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to report, every 30 days, on the implementation of the resolutions by all parties to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic.

2. The information contained herein is based on data available to agencies of the United Nations system, and from the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as from other Syrian and open sources. Data from agencies of the United Nations system on their humanitarian deliveries have been reported for the period from 1 to 31 October 2017.

II. Major developments**Box 1****Key points in October 2017^a**

1. Military activities and instances of significant military escalation that were reported in September continued to be reported in many areas, in particular activities targeting Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) areas in the Governorates of Dayr al-Zawr and Raqqah, as well as in Idlib Governorate and the eastern Ghutah enclave in Rif Dimashq Governorate.

^a Inputs provided from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Children's Fund, the International Organization for Migration, the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the United Nations Population Fund, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Nations Mine Action Service, the Department of Political Affairs and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat.



2. In eastern Ghutah, severe shortages of food supplies and a sharp increase in the prices of basic commodities were reported. The United Nations also received alarming reports that children in besieged eastern Ghutah were suffering from severe acute malnutrition, and that an estimated 400 people with health problems urgently required medical assistance and evacuations.

3. On 17 October, the Syrian Democratic Forces announced that Raqqah city had been fully retaken from ISIL after months of intense air strikes and fighting, amid reports of scores of civilian casualties, significant damage to the city's basic infrastructure and the displacement of nearly all civilians from the city. The presence of explosive remnants of war across the city remains a major concern for the protection of civilians and their eventual safe return, and is hampering access of humanitarian partners to Raqqah city.

4. Military operations in Dayr al-Zawr Governorate continued to impact civilians despite the announcement by Syrian Government forces that they had broken the ISIL-imposed siege on parts of Dayr al-Zawr city last month. In October alone, some 270,000 people were displaced from Dayr al-Zawr Governorate according to the displacement monitoring tracker of the United Nations and its partners, mostly to other parts of Dayr al-Zawr Governorate, but also to Raqqah, Aleppo and Hasakah Governorates. Many of those who remained in Dayr al-Zawr could not be reached with humanitarian assistance owing to the proximity of the fighting or as areas continued to be under ISIL control.

5. On 12 October, the only vaccine cold room in Mayadin district, Dayr al-Zawr Governorate, was reportedly damaged by an airstrike, resulting in the destruction of over 135,000 doses of United Nations-provided measles and polio vaccines. This represents a setback for the response to the polio outbreak in the area. The United Nations received credible reports of three further attacks that impacted health-care facilities and personnel in October.

6. In October, the United Nations reached millions of people in need with humanitarian assistance from within Syria, including some 2,793,440 people who received food assistance through regular deliveries; 797,700 people were reached through cross-border convoys and 199,000 people were reached through five humanitarian inter-agency cross-line convoys. Humanitarian inter-agency cross-line convoys reached 41,500 people in the besieged locations of Qabun, Kafr Batna and Saqba in Rif Dimashq Governorate, out of a total of 419,920 people besieged in the Syrian Arab Republic.

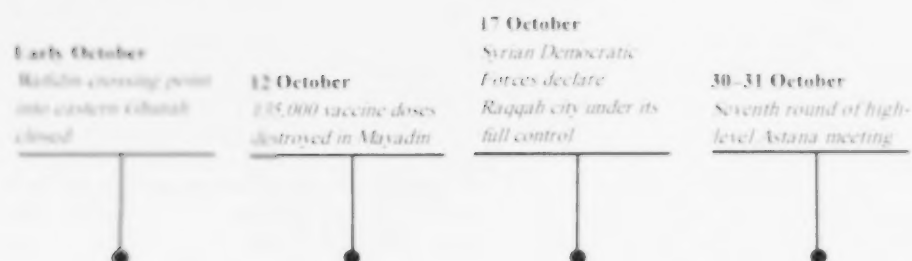
3. On 26 October, the Special Envoy for Syria announced his intention to convene the eighth round of the intra-Syrian talks in Geneva on 28 November. He noted that talks should focus on the schedule and process for drafting a new constitution, as well as on the precise requirements for United Nations-supervised elections in accordance with Security Council resolution 2254 (2015). In support of the intra-Syrian talks, the Special Envoy continued to stress that existing de-escalation and ceasefire arrangements being discussed in Astana should be strengthened, while ensuring that serious and concrete steps are taken to increase humanitarian access, and to further advance on the issues of detainees, abductees and missing persons and humanitarian mine action. At their meeting in Astana on 30 and 31 October, the guarantors of the memorandum on de-escalation of 4 May — the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and Turkey — emphasized progress in the fight against terrorism and underlined that the Syrian conflict had no military solution and should be solved only through a political process in line with resolution 2254 (2015).

4. The implementation of the de-escalation and de-confliction areas continued to face challenges in reducing violence. Fighting in these areas, and across Syria, continued to affect civilians and civilian infrastructure, such as schools and hospitals. Throughout the reporting period, fighting continued in the Governorates of Damascus, Rif Dimashq, Hama, Dar'a, Qunaytirah, Aleppo, Idlib, Homs, Ladhqiyyah, Raqqah and Dayr al-Zawr.

5. In Rif Dimashq Governorate, fighting, ground-based strikes and air strikes continued in the eastern Ghutah enclave, where almost 400,000 civilians remained besieged by Syrian Government forces, representing nearly 95 per cent of all those besieged across Syria. Civilians in eastern Ghutah are facing gravely deteriorating conditions. A recent World Food Programme (WFP) assessment reported severe shortages of food supplies and a sharp increase in the prices of basic commodities, further eroding coping mechanisms. The cost of a standard food basket in October was almost 10 times higher than the national average. The United Nations also received alarming reports indicating that children in the besieged enclave are suffering from severe acute malnutrition, and that an estimated 400 people urgently require evacuation as there is no adequate medical assistance available in the area.

6. Fierce fighting continued between Government forces and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in the Governorates of Hama, Homs, Dayr al-Zawr and Raqqah, where Government forces captured Mayadin city on 14 October. The Syrian Democratic Forces, backed by the United States-led international counter-ISIL coalition and led by the Kurdish People's Protection Units (Yekîneyên Parastina Gel, or YPG), announced on 17 October that Raqqah city had been fully retaken from ISIL. This announcement came after months of intensified airstrikes and heavy shelling had reportedly resulted in hundreds of civilian deaths, widespread destruction of homes and basic infrastructure and the displacement of nearly all civilians from the city. The Syrian Democratic Forces, backed by the United States-led international counter-ISIL coalition, also continued to advance against ISIL in Raqqah, Hasakah and Dayr al-Zawr Governorates. Fighting between non-State armed opposition groups and ISIL was reported in Dar'a province with no significant changes in frontlines. Fighting continued in Hama province, where non-State armed opposition groups again reduced the footprint of ISIL in the area. Explosive weapons continue to be fired into populated areas, indiscriminately killing and injuring people, destroying and damaging vital infrastructure and leaving thousands of communities in areas littered with explosive remnants of war that continued to kill and injure civilians and impede humanitarian access years after their intended use. The use of improvised explosive devices in certain areas adds to the complexity of the explosive hazard threat.

Figure 1
Key dates in October 2017



Box 2

United Nations response to polio outbreak in Syria

1. A polio outbreak began in the first half of 2017 and has continued to spread throughout the year. Some 63 children have been diagnosed with the virus, most (60 cases) in Dayr al-Zawr Governorate, with three cases reported in Raqqah and Homs Governorates. The median age of those infected is 15 months old.

2. Before the onset of the Syrian humanitarian crisis in 2011, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic was procuring all its vaccine requirements. Following a first outbreak in 2013, the Government, together with the United Nations and non-governmental organizations, undertook multiple vaccination campaigns, as part of a broad effort to increase resistance to the debilitating virus. Unlike the first wild outbreak in 2013, the current outbreak is a circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type-2 (cVDPV2). Such viruses are extremely rare, but can occur in instances when population immunity against polio is very low; this is often a result of compromised access to immunization services.

3. Since the outbreak there has been a concerted effort by the United Nations, led by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), in coordination with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and local authorities, to carry out a strategic response to swiftly stop cVDPV2 transmission. Two mass vaccination rounds have been carried out in Dayr al-Zawr and Raqqah Governorates, reaching resident, refugee and internally displaced children. More than 255,000 children were reported vaccinated in Dayr al-Zawr and more than 140,000 reported vaccinated in Raqqah.

4. Campaign implementation in affected areas has not been without significant challenges, and this achievement has relied on strong coordination between all response partners. In addition to vaccination against polio, surveillance for acute flaccid paralysis, a major indicator for the disease, continues around the country, particularly where infections have been reported.

7. The United Nations has not been able to verify first-hand the situation in Raqqah, owing to lack of access but has received reports that most of the city has been damaged or destroyed as a result of the fighting. Humanitarian actors have not had access to the city in view of the continuation of military operations and the presence of explosive remnants of war. The city is reportedly littered with a complex array of explosive hazards, including unexploded ordnance, landmines and improvised explosive devices that pose a direct risk to civilians and humanitarian workers. There are reports that thousands of people have been allowed to return to certain parts of Raqqah city and its surroundings after the Syrian Democratic Forces declared specific areas to be safe following unexploded ordnance clearance operations.

8. Meanwhile, the United Nations continues to provide humanitarian assistance to people in need in camps and across Raqqah and Hasakah Governorates where there is a high concentration of internally displaced persons, wherever and whenever access permits. Since the beginning of the anti-ISIL offensive in Raqqah in November 2016, more than 436,000 people have been displaced within and from Raqqah Governorate. The United Nations and its partners are reaching 450,000 people in need across the north-eastern part of the Syrian Arab Republic each month, including 56,000 people in 48 camps and temporary shelters in Raqqah, Hasakah, Aleppo and Dayr al-Zawr Governorates. Reports of recruitment of fighters by the People's Protection Units (YPG) in internally displaced person camps in the

north-east of the country, including the recruitment of children and adolescents, have continued. Four cases of child recruitment, including two of unaccompanied minors, have been identified in the last two months.

9. Military operations in Dayr al-Zawr Governorate continued to affect civilians. In mid-October, in Mayadin city and surrounding areas in rural Dayr al-Zawr Governorate, around 15,000 people were reportedly without access to health services following air strikes on the city, rendering hospitals and medical points inoperative. Overall, air strikes and clashes resulted in the displacement of 270,000 people (according to the displacement monitoring tracker of the United Nations and its partners), mostly to other parts of Dayr al-Zawr Governorate and also to Raqqah and Hasakah Governorates. Many of those who remain in Dayr al-Zawr cannot be reached owing to the proximity of the fighting or because areas continue to be under ISIL control. Most of those who fled north into Raqqah and Hasakah Governorates are arriving at reception areas for security screening by the Syrian Democratic Forces, before moving onwards to camps such as those in Ayn Isa or Arishah in Raqqah and Hasakah Governorates, respectively. While humanitarian partners are responding in these locations, additional support is needed, in particular at the reception areas where thousands of people are gathered while awaiting security screening.

10. In Homs Governorate, ISIL fighters carried out a ground offensive into Government-controlled areas east of Tadmur (Palmyra) and south of Sukhnah in early October. Following an ISIL attack on the Government-controlled Qaryatayn town in late September, heavy clashes reportedly killed 23 civilians. About 11,000 people reportedly remain in the area, without adequate supplies of water and food.

11. In Idlib Governorate, fighting, ground-based strikes and air strikes continued to affect civilians. Attempts by Hay'at Tahrir Al-Sham, led by Jabhat Fath al Sham (former Nusra Front), designated as a terrorist organization by the Security Council, to interfere in civil governance and the provision of humanitarian aid in the Governorate also impacted civilians. While humanitarian assistance was not affected during the reporting period, there are concerns that onerous requests, such as specific limitations on procurement of goods could result in limited ability to reach those in need. As part of the de-escalation zones agreed among the Astana co-guarantors, Turkish armed forces were deployed as of mid-October to be stationed at observation posts in parts of Idlib.

12. During the reporting period, an estimated 50,000–55,000 Syrians remained stranded along the Syrian-Jordanian border, in the area known as the berm. The last cycle of partial aid assistance to this area was halted over four months ago, on 15 June, with the food security and health situation of many of those stranded, notably children, having continuously deteriorated. The United Nations has continued to urgently call for emergency humanitarian access to make possible the delivery of food and essential non-food assistance in the immediate term, while longer-term solutions for this population are pursued. Meanwhile, critical health assistance and water supplies continue to be provided from the Jordanian side of the berm to this community.

Protection

13. Air and ground-based strikes continued to kill and injure civilians in significant numbers throughout the month. Explosive weapons continue to be fired into populated areas, indiscriminately killing and injuring people, destroying and damaging vital infrastructure and leaving thousands of communities in areas littered with explosive remnants of war that continue to kill and injure civilians and impede humanitarian access years after their intended use. The large number of civilian

casualties remains a strong indication that violations of the prohibition on launching indiscriminate attacks and of the principles of proportionality and precaution are continuing. Children are particularly affected by the fighting and, in some incidents, have constituted the majority of the casualties.

14. Fighting continued to affect civilian infrastructure, including medical facilities, schools, markets and places of worship. On the basis of information received by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), civilian casualties occurred in various governorates (see annex), in possible violation of international humanitarian law. OHCHR has documented alleged incidents perpetrated by many parties to the conflict, including Government forces and their allies, non-State armed opposition groups and Security Council-designated terrorist groups.

15. In addition, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic provided OHCHR with information on alleged violations. In a note verbale received on 3 November, the Permanent Mission of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations provided OHCHR with a list of reported casualties and injured civilians between 22 September and 21 October in Damascus, Rif Dimashq, Dar'a, Suwayda', Homs, Hama, Tartus, Ladhqiyyah, Idlib, Aleppo, Dayr al-Zawr, Hasakah, Qunaytirah, and Raqqah. A total of 61 civilians, 15 of them children, were reported to have been killed and 238 injured, including 73 children. The casualties were reported to have been the result of mortars and explosive devices.

16. Despite the call made to the Syrian authorities in Human Rights Council resolution 19/22 to cooperate with OHCHR, including through the establishment of a field presence with the mandate to protect and promote human rights, further reporting by the Office remains curtailed by the denial of access for it to the Syrian Arab Republic.

17. The United States Department of Defense publicly confirmed that, in October, the United States-led coalition carried out 495 strikes against ISIL targets in the Governorates of Hasakah, Raqqah and Dayr al-Zawr. Nearly 75 per cent of the strikes (or 371 air strikes) were reported to have been in the vicinity of Raqqah city and 21 per cent in Dayr al-Zawr. In addition, the United States Department of Defense reported that the coalition had conducted airstrikes near Mayadin on 2 and 3 October, near Hajin on 3 October, and near Albu Kamal on 9 October.

18. The Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation issued a statement on 13 October noting that there had been intensified airstrikes on Dayr al-Zawr Governorate, with Russian aircraft carrying out 383 sorties which hit 993 targets in Dayr al-Zawr Governorate over the previous week. They further noted that three large-scale strikes had been launched using both sea- and air-launched cruise missiles over the month.

19. The United Nations and its health partners received credible reports of four attacks that affected health-care facilities and personnel in October, of which two have been verified. On 6 October, an attack on Shifa' primary health care centre in Duma, Rif Dimashq, resulted in damage to the facility building, as well as damage to at least one ambulance. The facility went out of service. On 12 October, the World Health Organization (WHO) received reports of an attack that destroyed the only vaccines cold room in Mayadin district, Dayr al-Zawr Governorate. More than 100,000 doses of measles vaccines and 35,000 doses of polio vaccines were stored in the facility, together with equipment, syringes and stocks for all vaccine-preventable childhood diseases. This is a setback for efforts to control the polio outbreak in the area, with new cases continuing to be reported.

20. Educational facilities also continued to be affected by the fighting. Reports of attacks on or around schools in late October in Rif Dimashq Governorate, in Kafr Batna on 16 and 29 October, and in Jisrayn and Misraba on 31 October, allegedly resulted in the deaths of several children.

21. On 16 October, demonstrations broke out inside Homs Central Prison following an attempt by the security forces to raid a wing overrun by the protestors. On 21 October, the governor and police chief of Homs Governorate visited the prison and met with the detainees who had been on hunger strike since the demonstrations began. The authorities agreed that judicial bodies would visit the facility to examine the relevant pending cases; that cases sentenced under the now-abolished Supreme State Security Court would be reviewed; and that the detainees' cases would be brought to the attention of the President. The detainees agreed to immediately suspend their hunger strike and their demonstrations for at least seven days.

Humanitarian access

Box 3

Key points for humanitarian access

1. In October, United Nations humanitarian agencies and partners continued to reach millions of people in need through all available access modalities, including from within the Syrian Arab Republic, in cooperation with the Syrian authorities. Regular programming from within the country resulted in the delivery of humanitarian assistance to millions of people in need, including some 2,793,440 people who received food assistance during the month through more than 1,575 deliveries.

2. In October, five humanitarian inter-agency cross-line convoys delivered much-needed assistance to 199,000 people. The total number of people reached under the October–November plan through 31 October was 110,000 or 9.1 per cent of the overall number of people to whom access was originally requested under the plan. In October, humanitarian inter-agency cross-line convoys reached 41,500 people in the besieged locations of Qabun, Kafr Batna and Saqba in Rif Dimashq Governorate, out of a total of 419,920 besieged nationwide.

3. Cross-border activities remain a vital part of the humanitarian response in the Syrian Arab Republic. Since the adoption of Security Council resolution 2165 (2014) in July 2014, assistance has been delivered from Turkey to millions of Syrians in various parts of Aleppo, Idlib, Ladhqiyyah and Hama Governorates, and from Jordan to Dar'a, Qunaytirah and Suwayda' Governorates. In October, 420 trucks in 20 convoys delivered much-needed life-saving assistance to more than 797,700 people in need in northern and southern areas of the Syrian Arab Republic.

4. The removal and delisting of medical supplies from inter-agency cross-line convoys remained a major challenge, with supplies sufficient for more than 12,195 treatments removed or not allowed to be loaded in October (see table 2). This brings the total number of medical items removed or not allowed to be loaded to more than 630,000 since the beginning of the year.

22. The delivery of humanitarian assistance to people in need remained extremely challenging in many areas of the country as a result of active conflict, shifting conflict lines, administrative impediments and deliberate restrictions imposed on the movement of people and goods by the parties to the conflict. In particular, access by the United Nations and its partners to those people living in besieged and hard-to-reach locations remains a critical concern.

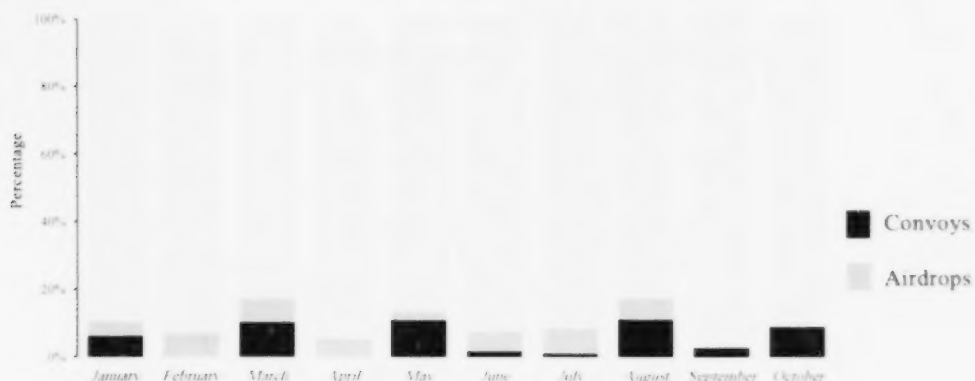
23. The United Nations inter-agency convoy plan for October and November requested access to 33 locations in besieged and hard-to-reach areas, seeking to reach 1,206,000 people. Inter-agency convoys are prepared for areas with multi-sectoral needs where access is limited, to ensure that United Nations support is needs based. In October, only five inter-agency convoys could be dispatched to besieged and hard-to-reach locations, reaching 199,000 people in need (see table 1 for a list of inter-agency convoys sent in October). Four of these deliveries were under the October–November plan, reaching some 110,000 people; the 5 October delivery to Hulah, Homs Governorate, and Harbinafsih, Hama Governorate (reaching 89,000 people) was a delayed delivery under the August–September plan. The total number of people reached under the October–November plan to 31 October is 110,000, or 9.1 per cent of the overall number of people to whom access was originally requested under the bimonthly plan. That number does not include convoys carrying supplies delivered by other humanitarian actors.

Table 1
Inter-agency cross-line humanitarian convoys in October 2017

<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Requested target (number of beneficiaries)</i>	<i>Number of beneficiaries reached</i>	<i>Type of assistance</i>
5 October	Hulah and Harbinafsih	89 000	89 000	Multisectoral
15 October	Qabun	1 500	1 500	Multisectoral
19 October	Dar al-Kabirah, Ghantu, Iayr Ma'lah	40 250	33 500	Multisectoral
26 October	Yalda, Babila, Bayt Saham	57 200	35 000	Multisectoral
30 October	Kafr Batna and Saqba	93 000	40 000	Multisectoral

24. Individual agencies continued to submit requests for single-agency deliveries during the reporting period to locations throughout the country. Single-agency deliveries are undertaken in areas where access is possible; there are therefore fewer concerns about the ability of the United Nations to address assessed needs in those areas. In October, WFP submitted 1,575 official requests to the authorities to obtain facilitation letters for the transport of food assistance to locations throughout the country, all of which were approved. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees submitted 65 facilitation letters for the movement of core relief items and livelihood kits, of which 62 were approved and 3 not, citing security concerns. Both international and Syrian non-governmental organizations continued to undertake needs assessments and to provide support (including medical, educational, psychosocial and protection services) in besieged and hard-to-reach locations, under extremely challenging circumstances and in accordance with humanitarian principles.

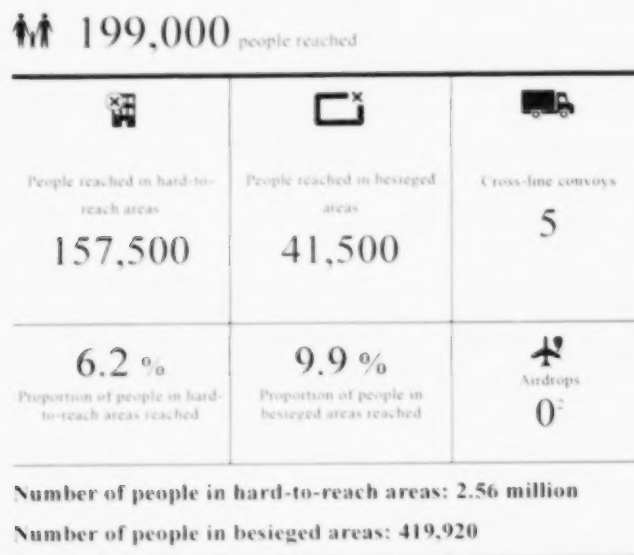
Figure II
United Nations inter-agency cross-line humanitarian operations: percentage of people reached each month in besieged areas



25. Humanitarian access continues to face restrictions by parties to the conflict in besieged and hard-to-reach locations. On average in 2017, only 26 per cent of beneficiaries scheduled for assistance under specific requests have been reached through inter-agency cross-line convoys each month. Bureaucratic impediments, such as non-issuance of facilitation letters by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, continue to be a significant factor in these delays or non-deliveries, despite the creation of a tripartite coordination mechanism to address such problems. Access was also restricted by non-State armed opposition groups for United Nations staff on convoy to Yalda (Damascus Governorate) on 26 October, who were not granted the security guarantees necessary to travel. This meant that critical assessments could not be conducted. During the reporting cycle, the majority of agencies of the United Nations system and United Nations partners continued to be unable to gain access to the populations in need in areas of the country still controlled by ISIL.

26. Land deliveries to the north-eastern governorates via the Aleppo-Manbij route proceeded in a regular manner in October. Through those deliveries, the United Nations provided food and nutrition assistance to over 380,000 people in Hasakah and Raqqah Governorates, as well as to accessible parts of north-western Dayr al-Zawr Governorate. The United Nations and its partners have been responding at scale to the needs, providing assistance to displaced persons and host communities in 60 sites, camps and/or areas of high concentrations of internally displaced persons in Raqqah, Aleppo, Hasakah and Dayr al-Zawr Governorates.

Figure III
United Nations inter-agency cross-line humanitarian operations, October 2017



27. Life-saving and life-sustaining medical items sufficient for more than 12,195 treatments were rejected or removed from convoys in October by the Syrian authorities, according to WHO. Details regarding the treatments and supplies removed are shown in table 2. Additional medical supplies were scheduled to be delivered as part of the bimonthly inter-agency convoy plan; however, only five inter-agency convoys were able to proceed in October. Since the beginning of 2017, WHO has submitted 10 single-agency requests to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to gain access to 14 locations in six governorates. The Government has approved nine requests and one has been rejected.

Table 2
Medical supplies removed from humanitarian convoys in October 2017

Location	Number of treatments	Types of supplies
Hulah and Harbinafsih	3 412	Phenobarbitone, amitriptyline hydrochloride, haloperidol, gastro-resistant sodium valproate, ketamine hydrochloride injection, carbamazepine, beclomethasone dipropionate nasal spray, atracurium
Kafr Batna and Saqba	5 720	Psychotropic medicine or medicines for common symptoms in palliative care (valproic acid, carbamazepine, haloperidol tablets, phenobarbitone), medical consumables (syringes, intravenous catheter, sterile surgical gloves), medical supplies (including sphygmomanometer, scale, N95 mask, safety box for used syringes), medical kits such as pneumonia kits A and B, trauma kits, emergency health kits and surgical supply kits, medical equipment, including ultrasound system, oxygen concentrator-sterilizer, bench-top, hot-air surgical cautery device, ventilator for adults, portable x-ray machine, autoclave mobile x-ray system

² Airdrop operations to Dayr al-Zawr city were discontinued in early September, as military developments enabled the United Nations and its partners to resume land access.

<i>Location</i>	<i>Number of treatments</i>	<i>Types of supplies</i>
Dar al-Kabirah	603	Tetracycline hydrochloride, ketamine hydrochloride, oxytocin, atracurium besylate
Yalda, Babila, Bayt Saham	2 460	Medical equipment such as water bath, diagnostic ultrasound system, minor surgery instruments, surgical supply kits, stainless steel instruments for minor surgery, medicine such as analgesic, pneumonia kits, antihypertensive, anti-epileptic

Humanitarian response

28. In October, United Nations humanitarian agencies and partners continued to reach millions of people in need through all available access modalities, including (a) regular programming from within the Syrian Arab Republic, whereby humanitarian deliveries reach those in need without crossing conflict lines, (b) cross-line convoys, whereby assistance from inside the country is delivered across conflict lines, and (c) cross-border deliveries, whereby assistance is provided to those in need from Jordan and Turkey (see table 3). In addition to the United Nations and its partners, non-governmental organizations continued to deliver life-saving assistance to people in need. The Government continued to provide basic services both in areas under its control and in many areas beyond its control. Local authorities in many areas controlled by non-State armed opposition groups also continued to provide services, when possible.

Table 3

People reached by the United Nations and other organizations through all modalities in October 2017

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Number of people reached</i>
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	9 780
International Organization for Migration	44 556
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	2 705 976
United Nations Children's Fund	16 000 000
United Nations Development Programme	461 818
United Nations Population Fund	370 900
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	216 703
World Food Programme	13 560 000
World Health Organization	396 662

29. During the reporting period, cross-border deliveries continued from Turkey and Jordan into the Syrian Arab Republic under the terms of Security Council resolutions 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015) and 2332 (2016) (see figure IV). In line with those resolutions, the United Nations notified the Syrian authorities in advance of each shipment, including its content, destination and number of beneficiaries.

30. Since cross-border operations began in July 2014, following the adoption of resolution 2165 (2014), the United Nations has conducted more than 663 cross-border consignments, with more than 16,844 trucks (11,854 via Bab al-Hawa and 1,596 via Bab al-Salam from Turkey; and 3,394 via Ramtha from Jordan). The United Nations cross-border operations complement the critical role played by

international and Syrian non-governmental organizations that provide assistance and services to millions more from neighbouring countries.

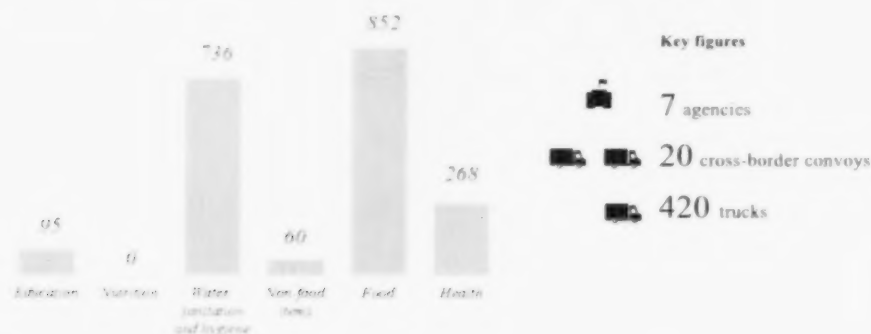
31. In October, for example, the United Nations and its implementing partners delivered food assistance for more than 797,700 people through cross-border deliveries from Turkey and Jordan. In October, WHO in Gaziantep conducted two cross-border deliveries (one via Bab al-Hawa and one via Bab al-Salam) providing supplies for 9 health care facilities and 80,567 beneficiaries. More than 546,600 people in the southern Syrian Arab Republic benefited from improved access to clean water through maintenance operations of water and sanitation systems. In addition, United Nations nutrition partners continued to provide services to more than 56,000 beneficiaries.

32. The United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic continued its operations during the reporting cycle, monitoring 420 trucks used in 20 consignments by seven United Nations entities in October, confirming the humanitarian nature of each and notifying the Syrian authorities after each shipment. The Mechanism continued to benefit from the excellent cooperation of the Governments of Jordan and Turkey. Mechanism monitoring is further supported by additional monitoring mechanisms in place for the delivery of cross-border assistance. The United Nations provides 48-hour notice to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic for all shipments. Once in the country, the United Nations partners that deliver aid ensure that shipments arrive at warehouses. Independent third-party companies contracted by the United Nations ensure independent verification of the assistance arriving at the warehouses and further monitor the distribution and/or service provision of the assistance.

Figure IV

Number of beneficiaries assisted by the United Nations and its partners by cluster through cross-border humanitarian deliveries, October 2017

(Thousands)



33. During the reporting period, WHO, UNICEF and their implementing partners launched a national polio vaccination from 8 to 12 October, targeting 2,738,323 children under 5 years of age. In total, 2,136,759 children under 5 were reached, representing a coverage rate of 78 per cent. The United Nations Fund for Population Activities was able to reach 370,900 people in Syria, including 27,992 in hard-to-reach areas, with sexual and reproductive health services.

34. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) began its fourth and final round of cash distribution for 2017 on 22 October and it is expected to conclude in the first week of December. By 31 October, 145,865 Palestine refugees had received cash assistance out of the

418,000 targeted beneficiaries. The third round of UNRWA food assistance delivery is still ongoing and is expected to conclude in November. During October, 39,139 food parcels were distributed, benefiting 61,639 Palestine refugees across the country.

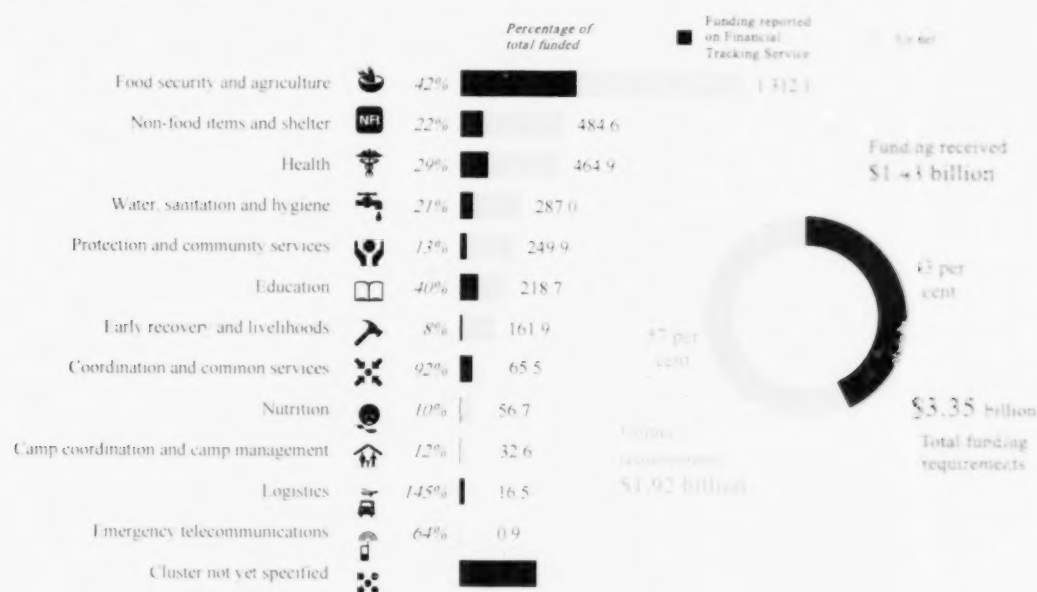
35. Throughout October, the Russian Federation sent information bulletins to the United Nations from the Russian Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic, which outlined the provision of bilateral relief assistance. Other Member States also continued to provide bilateral and other forms of humanitarian assistance.

Humanitarian financing

36. As at 1 November, the humanitarian response plan for the Syrian Arab Republic was 43 per cent funded, with \$1.43 billion of the requested \$3.35 billion received under the plan.

Figure V
Humanitarian response plan funding, 31 October 2017

(Millions of United States dollars)



Visas and registrations

37. A total of 49 new United Nations visa requests were submitted to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic in October. Of those, 27 were approved in October, 3 were denied and 19 remain pending. Of the 485 new visa applications submitted in earlier months, 43 were approved in October and 5 were denied. A total of 60 United Nations visa renewal requests were submitted in October, of which 39 were approved and 21 remain pending. An additional 620 requests for visa renewals were submitted in earlier months; all were approved.

38. A total of 23 international non-governmental organizations are registered with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to operate in the country. Some 220 national non-governmental organizations are authorized by the Syrian Arab Republic to operate through 315 branches countrywide.

Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and premises

39. Programmes of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes are implemented in areas affected by frequent clashes among belligerents, airstrikes, regular exchange of indirect artillery fire and asymmetric attacks. ISIL is also increasingly reverting to carrying out asymmetric attacks.

40. On 1 October and 15 October, the UNRWA distribution centre in Damascus was hit with mortars, damaging part of the infrastructure, including the roof and the guard's booth. No casualties were reported.

41. Since the start of the conflict, dozens of humanitarian workers have been killed, including 21 staff members of the United Nations or agencies of the United Nations system, of whom 17 were UNRWA staff members, 66 were staff members and volunteers of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and 8 were staff members and volunteers of the Palestine Red Crescent Society. Many staff members of international and national non-governmental organizations are also reported to have been killed.

42. A total of 28 staff members of agencies and programmes of the United Nations system (1 staff member of the United Nations Development Programme and 27 UNRWA staff members) are detained or missing.

III. Observations

43. I remain concerned that, despite the creation of de-escalation zones and intense effort by some countries to reduce the level of violence, violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law continue to be reported month after month, causing harm to civilians and damage to civilian objects throughout the country.

44. I once again call on all parties to the conflict to take constant care to spare civilians and civilian infrastructure and to comply with all their other obligations under international humanitarian law. I remind all Member States of their obligation to ensure that the parties that they support on the ground also comply with international humanitarian law.

45. Beyond the violence and insecurity limiting humanitarian access, administrative restrictions by all parties to the conflict continue to impede humanitarian access. These restrictions directly hinder the ability of the United Nations and its partners to deliver lifesaving assistance to those in need.

46. I reiterate my call for the renewal of Security Council resolution 2165 (2014) and subsequent resolutions, pursuant to which the United Nations provides a vital lifeline of assistance to those in need across northern and southern parts of the country. The United Nations does not have an alternative form of delivery that can replicate the reach of its cross-border activity, particularly as cross-line convoys continue to be hindered from reaching those most in need. Improved access through cross-line convoys is critical to ensure that the severe and worsening situation of civilians, including children, as observed by the United Nations in eastern Ghutah, is brought to an end.

47. It is critical that assistance continues to be delivered through all possible modalities, through regular deliveries providing aid within the Syrian Arab Republic, through convoys providing aid across conflict lines and through cross-border assistance in vast areas across the northern and southern parts of the country. Without any one of these operations, civilian suffering will increase. International humanitarian law requires all parties to the conflict to allow and facilitate rapid and

unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need which is impartial in character and conducted without adverse distinction.

48. Accountability is central to sustainable peace. I reiterate my call for the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic to be referred to the International Criminal Court. I also call upon all States, all parties to the conflict, civil society and the United Nations system as a whole to cooperate fully with the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011.

49. The conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic has caused and continues to cause immeasurable suffering to millions of civilians. It is imperative to see suffering lessened through the provision of immediate life-saving assistance for all in need. This is the least that should be done, yet every month far fewer are reached than is needed. At the same time, we must remain focused on a sustainable solution to end the conflict. This can be achieved only through a political agreement, guided by Security Council resolution 2254 (2015) and the Geneva Communiqué of 30 June 2012. In that regard, I welcome the announcement by my Special Envoy, Staffan de Mistura, of the eighth round of intra-Syrian negotiations, to be held in Geneva on 28 November. I echo his call on all parties to negotiate in good faith and with real intent to end this conflict. Ultimately, an inclusive political process convened under the auspices of the United Nations, together with the backing of the international community, is the only course that can provide a lasting solution to the Syrian conflict and bring an end to the tremendous suffering of the Syrian people.

Annex

Incidents affecting civilians recorded by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in October 2017*

Rif Dimashq and Damascus Governorates

- On 2 October, a twin suicide attack was carried out on a police station in the southern Damascus neighbourhood of Maydan, allegedly killing at least 15 men. ISIL reportedly claimed responsibility shortly after the incident.
- On 6 October, residential areas of Duma were simultaneously hit by airstrikes and ground-based strikes, reportedly killing four civilians (including a child), injuring at least 10 others and severely damaging a medical facility.
- On 11 October, two suicide attackers attempted to storm a police station on Khalid Ibn Al-Walid Street in Damascus and detonated their explosives at the main entrance, reportedly killing two men. ISIL allegedly claimed responsibility for the attack.
- On 15 October, ground-based strikes hit Qishla Street and other areas in the old city of Damascus. At least three civilians were allegedly killed and five others injured.
- On 15 October, a female teacher was reportedly killed in Saqba when a ground-based strike hit a bus stop in the main street connecting Failaq Ar-Rahman-controlled Saqba to Kafr Batna.
- On 16 October, ground-based strikes in the vicinity of a school in Kafr Batna, allegedly killed a female teacher and her daughter and injuring at least three other civilians.
- On 16 October, airstrikes hit a residential area in opposition-held Hazzah and partly destroyed a building, allegedly killing a girl and her grandmother.
- On 20 October, a series of ground-based strikes hit residential areas of Kafr Batna, reportedly killing a 9-year-old boy and injuring at least 17 other civilians, including women and children.
- On 26 October, ground-based strikes hit residential areas in Duma allegedly killing six civilians, including a woman and a boy, and wounding at least 10 other civilians.
- On 26 October, ground-based strikes hit a residential and market area in Saqba, reportedly killing two civilians employed as cleaners by the de facto local authorities.
- On 29 October, two successive ground-based strikes hit residential areas of Kafr Batna in the vicinity of a kindergarten, causing a state of panic among children in the kindergarten and local inhabitants, but reportedly causing no severe casualties.

* In line with Security Council resolution 2254 (2015), the present description of developments on the ground and the incidents that occurred during the month that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has been able to corroborate, relates to compliance with Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014) by all parties in the Syrian Arab Republic. The information is provided without prejudice to the work of the Task Force on the Ceasefire of the International Syria Support Group. The reporting is not a comprehensive listing of all violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of international human rights law that took place in the Syrian Arab Republic during the reporting period.

- On 29 October, four ground-based strikes reportedly hit a residential area in Hamuriyah, killing at least eight civilians, including three women. Two journalists reportedly heading to the kindergarten in Kafr Batna were hit by one of the strikes; one of them was allegedly killed outright while the other was transported to a medical facility in the area.
- On 29 October, ground-based strikes hit residential areas of Saqba, reportedly killing three civilians including a boy, and injuring an unknown number of other civilians.
- On 31 October, a ground-based strike hit the entrance of a primary school in Jisrayn, reportedly killing four boys and one adult civilian, in addition injuring an unknown number of others, including several children. The strike occurred at the moment when children were leaving school, in accordance with the schedule followed in the area.
- On 31 October, two ground-based strikes hit residential areas in Misraba. One of the strikes fell in the vicinity of a school and reportedly killed three civilians, including a girl, a boy and his father, and injured an unknown number civilians.

Dar'a and Suwayda' Governorates

- On 7 October, ground-based strikes hit opposition-controlled Mismiyah city north-east of Dar'a Governorate, reportedly killing a civilian man, his wife and their son, who were all displaced from the Rural Damascus town of Duma.
- On 10 October, a male civilian was allegedly hit and killed by gunfire in Eastern Ghariyah as clashes between Government forces and their allies, and Southern Front-linked armed opposition groups occurred in the vicinity of the Dar'a/Damascus highway.
- On 13 October, ground-based strikes hit residential areas of Government-controlled Dar'a al-Mahattah in Dar'a city, reportedly killing three civilian men, including one displaced from opposition-controlled Dar'a al-Balad.
- On 14 October, ground-based strikes hit residential areas in Dar'a al-Balad and reportedly killed a boy and injured at least two civilians.
- On 19 October, ground-based strikes hit opposition-controlled Harah, allegedly killing a 12-year-old boy and a civilian woman.
- On 28 October, a civilian woman reportedly died as a result of her injuries after being hit by unidentified airstrikes carried out on Saham al-Jawlan on 23 October.

Aleppo Governorate

- On 16 October, unknown fighters captured 11 male civilians from their houses in Tall Rif'at town in northern Aleppo Governorate. The whereabouts of those civilians remain unknown.

Idlib Governorate

- On the morning of 6 October, airstrikes hit residential areas in the Eastern neighbourhood of Khan Shaykhun city, reportedly killing a 13-year-old boy and injuring an elderly man and a girl.
- On 7 October, airstrikes hit residential areas in the Eastern neighbourhood of Khan Shaykhun city and allegedly killed a woman and another civilian from the same family and injured two others, one of them a woman.

- On 9 October, airstrikes hit residential areas in the Western neighbourhood of Khan Shaykhun city, reportedly severely injuring five civilians, including one woman.
- On 11 October, a girl was allegedly killed when an improvised explosive device detonated near a Hay'at Tahrir Al-Sham checkpoint in a residential area of Armanaz town, and at least three other civilians, including a woman, were injured. The incident also reportedly killed at least six Hay'at Tahrir Al-Sham fighters.
- On 28 October, airstrikes hit residential areas in Sinjar, reportedly killing a male civilian and his son and injuring another boy. The victims were all from the same family.

Hama Governorate

- On the morning of 4 October, ground-based strikes hit residential areas in Kafr Zayta city and reportedly killed three male civilians.
- On 16 October, ground-based strikes hit agricultural lands in Lataminah, allegedly killing a male civilian and his three-year-old son and severely injuring another male civilian from the same family.

Homs Governorate

- On 14 October, ground-based strikes hit residential areas of opposition-controlled Ghantu in northern rural Homs, reportedly killing a boy and injuring at least six other civilians including women and children.
- On 16 October, ground-based strikes hit residential areas in opposition-controlled Talbisah city and reportedly killed a civilian woman and injured at least four other civilians.
- On 26 October, ground-based strikes hit residential areas of opposition-controlled Rastan in northern Homs, reportedly killing a male civilian and two boys from the same family, including a father and his son. The strikes also injured a number of other civilians.

Dayr al-Zawr Governorate

- On 1 October, airstrikes hit several residential areas near a hospital and Masriyah roundabout in ISIL-controlled Aibu Kamal city in eastern Dayr al-Zawr Governorate. At least nine civilians from two families, including two women and a girl, were reportedly killed and nine other civilians injured. In its public reporting, the United States-led coalition stated that, on the same day, it had conducted three strikes destroying an ISIL wellhead and engaging two tactical units near Aibu Kamal.
- On 1 October, airstrikes hit a residential area in the vicinity of a hospital behind Arba'in Street in Mayadin city, allegedly killing at least two male civilians and injuring another civilian.
- On 4 October, airstrikes in ISIL-held Asharah city in eastern Dayr al-Zawr hit water crossings while civilians were reportedly trying to cross the river, allegedly killing at least 15 civilians, including one woman and five boys. Civilians are understood to use the point to cross from Asharah towards Darnaj town as the majority of the bridges in the area have been destroyed.
- On 5 October, ground-based strikes hit residential areas of the Government-controlled Qusur neighbourhood in Dayr al-Zawr city, allegedly killing nine

civilians, including three women and three boys. The United States-led coalition publicly reported that on the same day, it conducted two strikes and engaged an ISIL tactical unit and destroyed two improvised explosive devices and a logistics node near Dayr al-Zawr.

- On 11 October, airstrikes hit residential areas near Omar Ibn Al-Khattab mosque in the centre of Albu Kamal city, reportedly killing at least 13 civilians, including five women and six children from one family. In its public reporting, the United States-led coalition stated that, on the same day near Albu Kamal, it had conducted a strike engaging an ISIL tactical unit and destroying an ISIL vehicle.
- On 11 October, airstrikes hit water crossings between Qurayya city and Tayyari town on the Euphrates River in eastern Dayr al-Zawr while civilians were reportedly trying to cross and allegedly killed 11 civilians, including two women, one girl and two boys.
- On 17 October, airstrikes hit a group of commercial vehicles near Masriyah roundabout close to Suwa'iyyah Bridge in Albu Kamal city, and reportedly killed at least eight civilians: three Iraqi refugees, four displaced civilians from Dayr al-Zawr city and one civilian from Albu Kamal. The United States-led coalition publicly reported that on the same day, coalition military forces had conducted two strikes consisting of three engagements against ISIL targets near Albu Kamal. The strikes reportedly engaged an ISIL tactical unit and destroyed two vehicle-borne-bomb factories and an ISIL headquarters.

Raqqah Governorate

- On 3 October, airstrikes hit close to water wells in ISIL-controlled Shuhada' neighbourhood in northern Raqqah city and allegedly killed at least 14 civilians, including six women and one girl, and injured no less than 11 other civilians. The civilians — many of them internally displaced persons from Tadmur in Homs Governorate — reportedly gathered around the wells to get water. On the same day, airstrikes hit a residential building on Marandiyah Street in the Badu neighbourhood of Raqqah city and allegedly killed 16 civilians, including three women and 11 children. On 3 October, at least 15 civilians from one family were reportedly killed when airstrikes and ground-based strikes hit residential areas of the ISIL-held Tawasi'iyah neighbourhood in Raqqah city. The airstrikes hit a building near Hadiqah al-Mururiyah area which was used by the civilians as a shelter. In its public reporting, the United States-led coalition stated that on 3 October near Raqqah, it conducted 35 strikes, which engaged 16 ISIL tactical units.
- On 4 October, ISIL-controlled Badu neighbourhood in Raqqah city was hit with airstrikes and ground-based strikes that allegedly killed at least seven civilians, including two women and four children. The United States-led coalition publicly reported that, on the same day near Raqqah, it had conducted 51 strikes engaging 17 ISIL tactical units.
- On 11 October, airstrikes hit a residential building in the heart of Raqqah city and reportedly killed 27 civilians, including 15 women and seven children (two boys and five girls). In its public reporting, the United States-led coalition stated that, near Raqqah on the same day, it conducted 32 strikes engaging three ISIL tactical units.
- At noon on 12 October, airstrikes hit residential areas in Badu neighbourhood in Raqqah city and allegedly killed at least seven civilians, including one woman and a child. The United States-led coalition publicly reported that, on

the same day near Raqqah, it conducted 29 strikes and engaged nine ISIL tactical units.

- On 14 October, Badu neighbourhood in Raqqah city was hit with airstrikes that reportedly killed eight civilians.

Hasakah Governorate

- On 12 October, a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device was detonated close to a Kurdish militia-controlled checkpoint in Abu Fas village at the border of Hasakah and Dayr al-Zawr Governorates, and reportedly killed at least 17 civilians, including at least two women and four children. The majority of those killed were believed to be displaced persons from Dayr al-Zawr.
- On 25 October, Kurdish fighters raided the makeshift Al-Sadd internally displaced person camp located in Arish village in southern Hasakah Governorate. They searched the cell phones of all the internally displaced persons in the camp, allegedly looking for those who sent pictures and documented violations taking place inside the camp.

**Security Council**

Distr.: General
22 November 2017

Original: English

**Letter dated 20 November 2017 from the Secretary-General
addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I have the honour to refer to paragraph 34 of the report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council dated 20 July 2000 (S/2000/718), in which he expressed his intention to appoint a senior official, based in Beirut, to help to coordinate United Nations activities with regard to Lebanon.

I wish to inform the Council of my intention to appoint Ms. Pernille Dahler Kardel (Denmark) as Acting United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon, succeeding Ms. Sigrid Kaag (Netherlands), effective 1 December 2017, until a full recruitment process is finalized for the post. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Ms. Kaag for her dedicated and effective leadership since her appointment in 2015.

Ms. Kardel is currently Deputy Special Representative for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) António Guterres





Security Council

Distr.: General
22 November 2017

Original: English

Letter dated 22 November 2017 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that your letter dated 20 November 2017 (S/2017/983) concerning your intention to appoint Ms. Pernille Dahler Kardel (Denmark) as Acting United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon has been brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council. They take note of the intention expressed in your letter.

(Signed) Sebastiano Cardi
President of the Security Council



**Security Council**Distr.: General
24 November 2017

Original: English

**Letter dated 22 November 2017 from the Chair a.i. of the
Governing Council of the United Nations Compensation
Commission addressed to the President of the Security Council**

On behalf of the Governing Council, I am pleased to provide a report on the results of the fifteenth special session of the Council, which was held on 21 November 2017 to consider options to ensure the resolution of the \$4.6 billion that remains to be paid to the Commission's only outstanding claim award. Delegations from the Governments of Iraq and Kuwait were present and addressed the Council.

It is recalled that in view of the extraordinarily difficult security circumstances in Iraq and the unusual budgetary challenges associated with confronting the issue, the Governing Council postponed Iraq's obligation to deposit 5 per cent of the proceeds generated by the export sales of Iraqi petroleum and petroleum products into the United Nations Compensation Fund as from October 2014 and, as a result, no compensation payments towards the outstanding claim award have been made since that time.

At the fifteenth special session, the Governing Council welcomed a proposal that deposits into the Compensation Fund be resumed in 2018, put forward by the Government of Iraq and accepted by the Government of Kuwait. The Council adopted decision 276 (2017), a copy of which is attached,* which provides for 0.5 per cent of oil proceeds to be deposited into the Compensation Fund in 2018, with percentages escalating annually to the end of 2021. Based on oil price and export projections, this would result in payment in full of the outstanding claim award and the conclusion of the Commission's mandate.

The Iraqi proposal also called for the transfer of the functions of the Commission's secretariat to the Security Council secretariat in New York and the lifting of the compensation obligations of the Government of Iraq under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. In the decision, the Governing Council affirmed that the Commission would remain in place under its current arrangements unless it decided otherwise.

(Signed) Heidi Serry
Minister Plenipotentiary
Deputy Permanent Representative on behalf of the Governing Council

* Not included in the present document, to be issued under the symbol S/AC.26/Dec.276 (2017).



**Security Council**

Distr.: General
24 November 2017
English
Original: Arabic

Letters dated 22 November 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Djibouti to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

In my capacity as the representative of the President of the 148th ordinary session of the Council of the League of Arab States at the ministerial level and on behalf of the Group of Arab States in New York, I have the honour to write to you in implementation of paragraphs 12 and 13 of resolution No. 8218 concerning Iranian interference in the internal affairs of Arab States (see annex), which was adopted on 19 November 2017 by the Council of the League at the ministerial level in an extraordinary session that was chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Djibouti. In that resolution, the Council of the League instructs the Group to contact you in your capacity as the President of the Security Council and inform you that Iran has violated Security Council resolution 2231 (2015), which concerns that country's ballistic missile programme. The Group was furthermore instructed to inform you that, contrary to Iranian claims that the programme is of a defensive nature, this offensive programme presents a grave threat to Arab national security. Moreover, the Council of the League wishes to inform you that Iran has violated Security Council resolution 2216 (2015) by arming terrorist militias in Yemen, and that it considers the firing of an Iranian-made ballistic missile from Yemeni territory at the city of Riyadh to be an act of aggression by Iran and a threat to Arab and international security and peace. In view of the above, the Council of the League calls on the Security Council to fulfil its responsibility to maintain international peace and security.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohamed Siad **Doualeh**
Permanent Representative of Djibouti
Representative of the President of the Council
of the League of Arab States at the ministerial level



Annex to the letter dated 22 November 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Djibouti to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Iranian interference in the internal affairs of Arab States

On 19 November 2017, the Council of the League of Arab States at the ministerial level convened for an extraordinary session at the request of Saudi Arabia. The session was chaired by Djibouti and attended by their excellencies the ministers for foreign affairs and ministers of the interior, the delegations of member States and the Secretary-General of the League.

The Council of the League

Having considered notes presented by Saudi Arabia and Bahrain,

Reaffirming Security Council resolution 2216 (2015),

Reaffirming Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations,

Reaffirming resolution No. 688 concerning Iranian interference in the internal affairs of Arab States, adopted at the Amman summit on 29 March 2017,

Reaffirming previous statements and resolutions adopted by the Council at the ministerial level on this topic, the most recent of which was resolution No. 8177 (148th ordinary session) dated 12 September 2017,

Reaffirming that relations between Arab States and the Islamic Republic of Iran should be based on the principle of good neighbourliness, rejection of the use of force or the threat thereof, and non-interference in the internal affairs of Arab States,

Having heard the briefing presented by the head of the Saudi Arabian delegation regarding the most recent act of aggression that was committed by militias affiliated with Iran (the Houthi-Saleh militias), namely, the firing of an Iranian-made ballistic missile from Yemeni territory,

Having heard the briefing presented by the head of the Bahraini delegation regarding the acts of terrorism and destruction that are being committed in his country, including, most recently, the bombing of oil pipelines by Iranian-supported terrorist groups,

Having heard the statements made by the heads of delegations and the Secretary-General,

Decides

1. To condemn strongly the firing by militias affiliated with Iran (the Houthi-Saleh militias) of an Iranian-made ballistic missile from Yemeni territory at the city of Riyadh and to consider that action to be a blatant act aggression against Saudi Arabian and a threat to Arab national security;
2. To reaffirm the legitimate right of Saudi Arabia to defend its territory pursuant to Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations and to support the measures that it takes, within the framework of international law, in response to Iranian violations;
3. To condemn all acts of terrorism committed by Iran in Bahrain, the most recent of which was the bombing of a Bahraini oil pipeline, and to consider that action to be an act of terrorism that was committed by an Iranian-backed group and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps;

4. To denounce and condemn ongoing interference in the internal affairs of Bahrain by Iran, which supports terrorism, trains terrorists, smuggles weapons and explosives, and incites sectarian strife; continues to make statements at various levels aimed at undermining security, order and stability; and has established terrorist groups in Bahrain that are funded and trained by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and the terrorist Hizbullah of Lebanon, as such conduct is contrary to the principles of good neighbourliness and non-interference in internal affairs set out in the Charter of the United Nations and prescribed by international law;
5. To support all measures taken by Bahrain to counter terrorism and terrorist groups, with a view to safeguarding its security and stability;
6. To commend the efforts of the security agencies of Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, which have succeeded in thwarting many terrorist plots and apprehending the members of the terrorist groups who were meant to carry out those plots and are supported by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and the terrorist Hizbullah of Lebanon;
7. To condemn the ongoing occupation by Iran of the three islands of the United Arab Emirates (Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa); and to express its support for all peaceful means and measures adopted by the United Arab Emirates to restore its sovereignty over the islands which, according to international law, are under occupation;
8. To condemn the policy of the Government of Iran and its ongoing interference in Arab affairs, with a view to fuelling sectarian and religious conflicts; to underscore that it must refrain from supporting groups that fan such conflicts, particularly in the Arab States of the Gulf; to call on it to halt its support for and funding of militias and armed parties in Arab countries, including, in particular, its interventions in Yemen and its support for and arming of those militias that are loyal to it and hostile to the legitimate Government of Yemen; and to cease using Yemen as platform from which to launch missiles at its neighbours and threaten maritime navigation in the Bab al-Mandab Straits and the Red Sea, as such conduct has a detrimental effect on the security and stability of Yemen and its neighbouring States, as well as the entire region, and constitutes a clear violation of Security Council resolution 2216 (2015);
9. To hold the terrorist Hizbullah of Lebanon, which is a partner in the Government of that country, responsible for supporting terrorism and terrorist groups in Arab States by providing them with advanced weapons and ballistic missiles, and to reiterate that it must stop spreading extremism and sectarianism, desist from interfering in the internal affairs of States and refrain from providing any support for terrorism or terrorists in the region;
10. To condemn and deplore the inflammatory and hostile statements that Iranian officials continue to make against Arab States, and to call on the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to cease making hostile statements or taking provocative actions, as that threatens regional security and stability;
11. To ban Iranian-funded satellite channels that broadcast from Arab satellites because they threaten Arab national security by inciting sectarian, religious and racial strife, and to request the Secretary-General to follow up on the implementation of this decision with the relevant parties;
12. To instruct the Group of Arab States in New York to contact the President of the Security Council and inform him that Iran has violated Security Council resolution 2231 (2015), which concerns that country's ballistic missile programme, and that, contrary to Iranian claims that the programme is of a defensive nature, this offensive programme presents a grave threat to Arab national security;

13. To instruct the Group of Arab States in New York to contact the President of the Security Council and inform him that Iran has violated Security Council resolution 2216 (2015) by arming terrorist militias in Yemen; that the Council of the League considers the firing of an Iranian-made ballistic missile from Yemeni territory at the city of Riyadh to be tantamount to an attack by Iran and a threat to Arab and international security and peace; and that the Security Council must fulfil its responsibility to maintain international peace and security;

14. To continue to include an item entitled "Iranian interference in the internal affairs of Arab States" on the agendas of Arab platforms of cooperation with international and regional groupings;

15. To request the Secretary-General of the League to monitor implementation of the present resolution and report to the Council at its next session on the measures taken in that regard.

(Resolution 8218 — extraordinary session — 19 November 2017)

-
- The Lebanese Republic is opposed to paragraphs 4, 6 and 9 of the resolution concerning Iranian interference in the internal affairs of Arab States. Lebanon opposes the reference to Hizbullah, which is described as a terrorist organization, and the reference to the fact that it is part of the Government. This designation is unacceptable because it is not sanctioned by the United Nations and is contrary to the Arab Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, particularly in view of the distinction made between resistance and terrorism. Hizbullah is a key player in Lebanon and represents a large number of Lebanese. It also has substantial representation in Parliament, the ministries and the constitutional institutions of Lebanon. We support the other paragraphs of the resolution, although some of them infringe on the policy of disassociation adopted by the Lebanese Government. We condemn any intervention in the internal affairs of Arab States. We reiterate the policy of disassociation that the Lebanese Government has adopted and have requested that all references to Hizbullah should be deleted, so that we might be able to endorse the entire resolution without any reservations.
 - The delegation of the Republic of Iraq expresses its reservation regarding paragraphs 8 and 9 of the resolution.



**General Assembly
Security Council**

Distr.: General
30 November 2017

Original: English

General Assembly
Seventy-second session
Agenda item 34 (a)
Prevention of armed conflict

Security Council
Seventy-second year

**Letter dated 22 November 2017 from the Permanent Representatives
of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and Turkey to
the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

We have the honour to forward herewith the joint statement adopted by Iran, Russia and Turkey in Sochi, on 22 November 2017, on the situation in Syria (see annex).

We should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 34 (a), and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Gholamali **Khoshroo**
Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran

(Signed) Vassily **Nebenzia**
Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation

(Signed) Feridun H. **Sinirlioglu**
Permanent Representative of Turkey



Annex to the letter dated 22 November 2017 from the Permanent Representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Joint statement by Presidents of Iran, Russia and Turkey

November 22, 2017

President of The Islamic Republic of Iran Hassan Rouhani, President of The Russian Federation Vladimir Putin and President of The Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan, gathered in Sochi on November 22, 2017, for a tripartite meeting, reaffirmed their determination to continue active collaboration among Iran, Russia and Turkey with a view to establishing peace and stability in Syria, envisaged by UNSCR 2254.

The Presidents expressed satisfaction with the current level of tripartite coordination on maintaining and strengthening the ceasefire regime in Syria, of which Iran, Russia and Turkey are guarantors.

The Heads of state noted that, following several years of international efforts to defeat unsc-designated terrorist groups in Syria, over the 11 months since the establishment of the ceasefire regime on December 29, 2016, a breakthrough had been made in bringing closer the elimination of DAESH, Nusra Front and all other terrorist organizations as designated by the UNSC and agreed that Iran, Russia and Turkey will continue cooperation for their ultimate defeat.

The Presidents emphasized that the creation of the de-escalation areas established in Syria through Astana process have been quite efficient and greatly helped to reduce violence, alleviate the humanitarian suffering, curb the flow of refugees, and start working to provide conditions for the safe return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

The Presidents acknowledged that the "Astana format" and its achievements have become an effective instrument for contributing to peace and stability in Syria.

The Presidents decided that Iran, Russia and Turkey would continue their coordinated efforts to ensure that the progress in reduction of violence is irreversible. They agreed to assist the Syrians in restoring unity of the country, and achieving a political solution of the crisis through an inclusive, free, fair and transparent Syrian-led and Syrian-owned process leading to a constitution enjoying the support of the Syrian people and free and fair elections with the participation of all eligible Syrians under appropriate un supervision.

The Heads of state reaffirmed their strong commitment to sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of The Syrian Arab Republic and emphasized that under no circumstances the creation of the above-mentioned de-escalation areas and any political initiative to solve the Syrian crisis undermine the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of The Syrian Arab Republic.

The Presidents expressed their support for a broad intra-Syrian dialogue involving representatives of all segments of Syrian society.

The Presidents called on the representatives of The Government of The Syrian Arab Republic and the opposition that are committed to the sovereignty, independence, unity, territorial integrity and non-fractional character of Syria to participate constructively in the Syrian national dialogue congress in Sochi in near

future. They agreed to actively contribute to the success of the Congress. Iran, Russia and Turkey will consult and agree on participants of the Congress.

The Presidents underscored the need for rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access and emphasized the need for the Syrian parties to take confidence-building measures, including the release of detainees/abductees and the handover of the bodies as well as identification of missing persons to create better condition for political process and lasting ceasefire. They called upon members of the international community to support the process of de-escalation and stabilization in Syria, inter alia, by sending additional aid to the Syrian people, facilitating the humanitarian mine action, preserving historical heritage, and restoring basic infrastructure assets, including social and economic facilities.

The Presidents expressed the hope that the progress in resolving Syrian crisis achieved through cooperation of Iran, Russia and Turkey would have a positive effect on the overall situation in the region, and reduce the risk of ethnic and sectarian divide.

The Presidents decided to meet again as needed.

The Presidents of Islamic Republic of Iran and The Republic of Turkey expressed their sincere gratitude to President of The Russian Federation, H.E. Vladimir Putin, for hosting this tripartite summit in Sochi.